

April

35 Cent

# Cosmopolitan



*All These - And More -  
In This Issue*

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Meredith Nicholson  
Lillian Russell  
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## GEORGE ADE *philosophizes on* LUXURIES

**R**IGHT here, and nowhere else, except in two or three other new countries, poor people get in on the luxuries.

Do you know of anyone, past the age of eight, who never rode in a motor car?

Countless millions in Europe regard the automobile as a rich man's luxury. It is a symbol of splendor which chases them off the roadways. They never dream of becoming acquainted with anything so huge and important.

The farmer in France or Italy or Germany has no telephone in his house. A good assortment of live stock—but no 'phone.

He has cows—but he does without butter.

He grows grain—to make white bread for the aristocrats of the city.

Meat on the table means a family feast.

The movie to him is a holiday treat and ice cream is a semi-annual jamboree.

The daughter has never rocked around on high heels or hit herself in the nose with a powder rag.

The son has never worn a snappy suit with the belt surrounding the lungs instead of the digestive organs.

Most of the human beings outside of this hemisphere line up as paupers. Invoice their holdings and you will find that the assets, per person, run up to about \$8.75.

The ordinary man we pass in the street carries probably \$75 worth of merchandise. The guess is low rather than high, because we have to take into account a suit of clothes, a hat, a pair of shoes, various undergarments, buttons made of a precious metal, and possibly some expensive fillings in the teeth.

If he had been born in Egypt or Ceylon or Burma or China or Japan or Africa he would be wearing a costume worth \$1.80 and be thankful that he had advanced from the breech-clout.

About 65 per cent of all the people in the world think they are getting along great when they are not starving to death.

In these days of hard-upness, when so many of us are curled up in mental anguish because we cannot slather money as we did in 1919, it may help if we reflect that, at least, each of us has a mattress at night, meals as usual, books to read and some sort of entertainment in the next block.

That's more than most of our far-away neighbors have.

We suffer more than they do because we have come to regard luxuries as necessities.

Many a man thinks the government at Washington is a failure if he has to stop smoking 35 cent cigars and compromise on cheap stogies costing only 20 cents each.

Take silk stockings away from a woman who has got used to the feel of them and she is liable to go into her room and die of a broken heart.

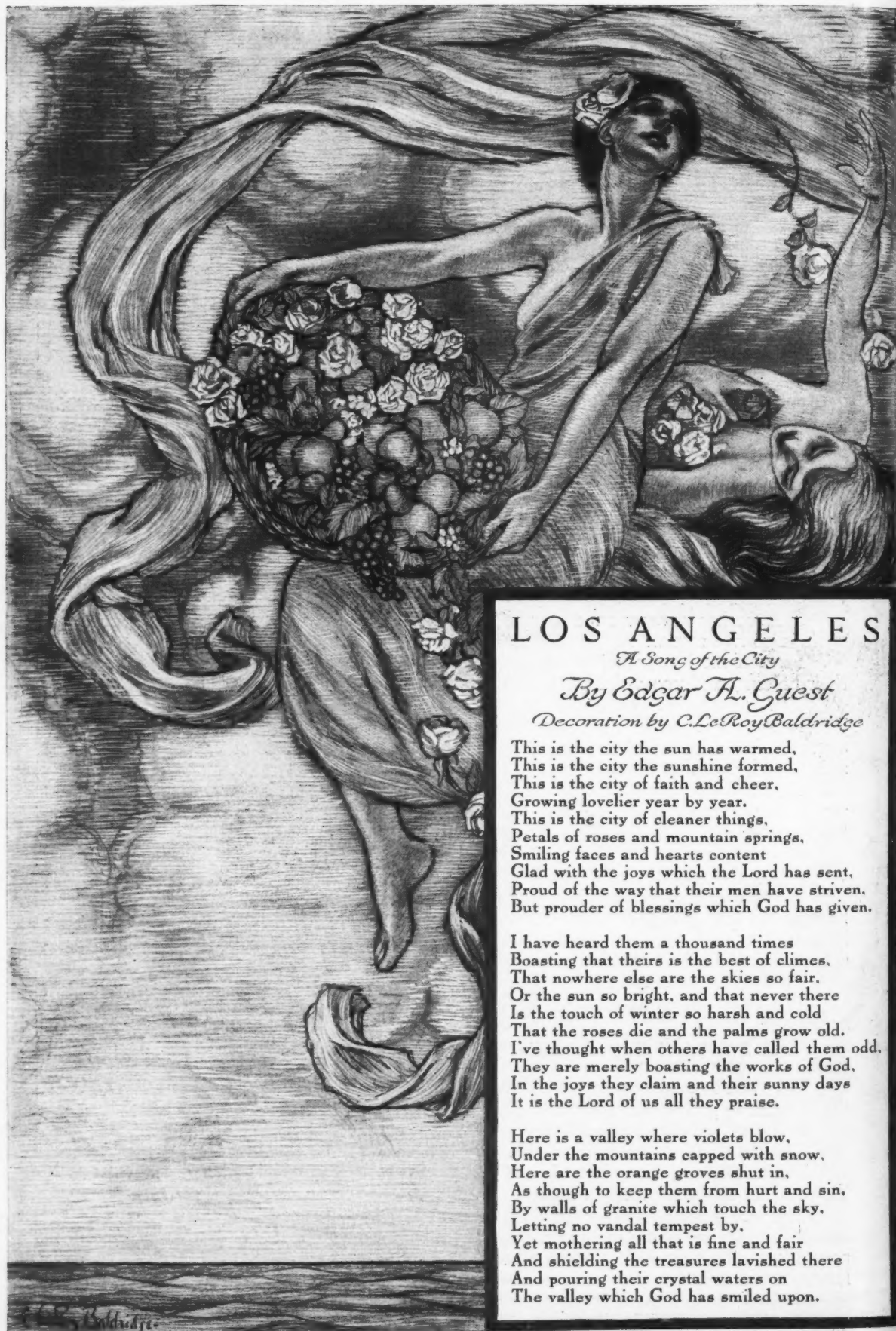
It is easy to believe that the things we have succeeded in getting are necessities.

The Russian housewife gets up in the morning and prays for a loaf of black bread.

Mr. and Mrs. Johnny-Jump-Up of the U. S. A. arise at 8 A.M. and gloomily face the prospect of getting along with five servants instead of seven.

The lean years may have their uses.

While we are down in the valley we may have time to figure it out that the five-pound box of candy at \$2 the pound may be taken out of the daily existence without leaving a scar.



## LOS ANGELES

*A Song of the City*

*By Edgar A. Guest*

*Decoration by C. LeRoy Baldridge*

This is the city the sun has warmed,  
This is the city the sunshine formed,  
This is the city of faith and cheer,  
Growing lovelier year by year.  
This is the city of cleaner things,  
Petals of roses and mountain springs,  
Smiling faces and hearts content  
Glad with the joys which the Lord has sent,  
Proud of the way that their men have striven,  
But prouder of blessings which God has given.

I have heard them a thousand times  
Boasting that theirs is the best of climes,  
That nowhere else are the skies so fair,  
Or the sun so bright, and that never there  
Is the touch of winter so harsh and cold  
That the roses die and the palms grow old.  
I've thought when others have called them odd,  
They are merely boasting the works of God,  
In the joys they claim and their sunny days  
It is the Lord of us all they praise.

Here is a valley where violets blow,  
Under the mountains capped with snow,  
Here are the orange groves shut in,  
As though to keep them from hurt and sin,  
By walls of granite which touch the sky,  
Letting no vandal tempest by,  
Yet mothering all that is fine and fair  
And shielding the treasures lavished there  
And pouring their crystal waters on  
The valley which God has smiled upon.



Here are buildings of brick and stone  
Such as all cities of earth have known,  
Here are churches and schools that stand  
Where once was a desert of yellow sand,  
Built by men in the selfsame way  
Men reared the structures of famed Cathay.  
Yet all of these wonders so newly done  
Are born of water and soil and sun,  
For these three, backed by the faith of man,  
Were all they had when the dream began.

This is the city of hope and cheer,  
Born of a kindly atmosphere.  
Here is proof that shall long exist  
Of the cheery creed of the optimist,  
For this is what happy hearts can do  
Who live and worship God's skies of blue.  
Not in the dark do these children grope,  
Here is a city of buoyant hope!  
Here in the glorious golden West  
Is the power of the sun made manifest.







**Y**OUNG Sherwood Latimer and Slake, the cynical, were discussing elementals, as men dining together sometimes do. Said Slake: "There are only three prime movers in this piece of oddity we call the human soul—fear, hunger and hate."

"No," said Latimer. "Love!" But Slake laughed harshly. "Try me!" Latimer challenged. And Slake did.

As you read this unforgettable story you will echo Latimer's "Try me!" And so will some one you love. But what will you say—not aloud, but in the inmost secrecy of your heart—when you reach the end?

# Elementals

*The story of a test—a simple test of your own character—that you will never dare make*

by *STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT*

*Illustrations by F. R. Gruger*

THE human soul is a house of many fantastic chambers. But for most of us, as we go our way easily through life, the most curious of those chambers are the least frequented. Bluebeard's closet we would not unriddle if we could; blank doors we gape at in passing with a little wonder, perhaps, but with more relief that we, who are safe in our everydayness, will never be called upon to turn the key in the lock and face the incredible things within.

There are almighty things behind those doors. There is beauty so intense that it burns on the mind like fiery water; much agony, hideous fear and many torments; and after the torments are past, a certain sense that seems to its wounded possessors priceless, a sense and memory of impossible things endured.

Not easily nor often do the doors swing open—they will not budge for the catchwords of ordinary speech. It is only the elemental forces of the naked and crying soul that will suffice to move them—the elemental powers, fear, hunger, love and hate. And this is just—and it is just that the doors should open seldom—for the man upon whom they have opened even for an instant will never be the same again.

When Sherwood Latimer had accepted the invitation of his temporary employer, John Slake, to a little dinner for two in the big ugly residence on Madison Avenue that was always so obtrusively guarded by private detectives—for so many fanatics seemed to feel it their duty to try and assassinate the first millionaire in America—it was with no idea at all of opening those doors or encountering anything more elemental than well cooked food.

But after the coffee he and Slake had got to talking.

About Latimer's just finished job in the first place—that excellent translation of Carlo Guiccardini's rare Sixteenth Century pamphlet that Slake had bought in his last bandit raid on European art collections. About Sixteenth Century Italy in general, and why Latimer, in spite of his twenty-five years, was the best man to be got on Sixteenth Century Italian in the country.

About universities—Latimer was going back to Harvard as an assistant in history in the fall—and the ludicrousness of the contrast between the salaries paid American teachers and the energy, personality and wide knowledge expected of them. And then slashing down into the elementals of life itself—what ruled this curious thing called human existence—what forces swayed it most wholly and made it pageant or tragedy or only gray succession of lackluster days.

They made an odd contrast as they stared at each other across the table cloth—the lean, hungry-looking young man in the shabby dress suit so obviously a family relic—the sleek, tigerish, diverse figure in the perfectly fitting dinner coat, with his voice as soft and purring as the voice of a gigantic cat. An even odder contrast when they had once begun to argue, for the argument concerned the essential invisible power that rules all human affairs.

That force, quoth Latimer, was the love of a man for the one woman—and he defended his youthful proposition with a vigor most unacademic in its skill and intensity, in spite of all Slake's grumblings of, "Bosh, my friend—pure bosh—there are only three prime movers in this vagrant piece of oddity we are pleased to call the human soul—fear, hunger and hate."

The little ormolu clock on the mantelpiece had chimed eleven some minutes before. They had been contending two hours over their point—and in spite of all Slake's mockingly perfect examples of human cowardice and weakness and insufficiency, he had not been able to make his opponent budge one inch from

his original position. The elder man leaned forward in his chair now, regarding the younger, his eyes widening and glowing like those of a great smooth beast when it walks into darkness from a lighted place. His voice, when it came again, had the slow throb and insistence of a savage drum.

"Good! You persist. You stick to your guns and your illusions in spite of any facts that I can adduce. Very well, let us take another instance. From Guiccardini this time." He spoke slowly and thoughtfully.

"You will remember the incident—your translation of it was flawlessly terse, by the way. In the chapter on the Merry Diversions of His Highness Prince Alessandro."

Latimer twisted uneasily. He did remember the incident, as it happened—one of those pieces of cruel and sensitive torture in which that mad Renaissance Prince had taken such a refined and exquisite delight.

"Leaving out a few of those details which are rather heady for a modern stomach, the two lovers whose devotion was a proverb in his court—the two lovers who were ready to undergo anything in life or death for each other. Their devotion came to the ears of Alessandro—and he, like myself, had somewhat of the practical executive's tendency for testing promises by performance. He suggested a test of this immortal devotion—a very simple test.

"You remember what the reward was to be if the test were withstood? It was liberal enough—a dukedom for the man, a permanent revenue for them both—titles of honor. The title of 'Most Faithful In Love' was the one which he had appropriately selected, if I recall it rightly. If the test were not withstood, the penalty was death, of course—and Alessandro had always been an experimenter in curious methods of making people die.

"And you will remember that, though it appeared they had little choice in the matter, even so the lovers were genuinely delighted to accept the test. 'They embraced it,' says Guiccardini, 'as if they were to dance together at a feast day, with great nobleness and joy of heart.' But, unfortunately, the test was an elemental one—and when Alessandro heard of their eagerness, I can imagine that he smiled. In fact, I can see him smiling."

He smiled himself and a resemblance that had long been pricking at him resolved itself with a shudder in Latimer's mind. That was where Slake came from, certainly—from his merciless power-in-leash to his taste for all that was superexquisite in art—from the hot, cruel, gorgeous first youth of awakening Italy. He had no real part in Twentieth Century America at all. Latimer stared at him as he might have at Alessandro come alive again in all his leopard's subtlety and strength and ravin. Slake went on:

"The test was to be by hunger—elemental hunger. For ten days they were to be kept in adjoining rooms—a strong glass partition between so that they could see each other but neither encourage each other by conversation nor plan for the future. They were given water lest they die of thirst and so spoil the jest—water but nothing more. On the tenth day, but at an hour known to neither of them since they had been left no means for calculating time—which is a refinement on which I must really congratulate Alessandro—the glass partition was to be removed and one piece of bread thrown in to them, as meat is thrown into a place where two starving animals are caged together. On their mutual behavior as regarded that piece of bread depended the success or failure of the test."

Slake paused and Latimer brushed his hand across his eyes for a moment. Slake's voice had made the picture indecently vivid—the two hunger-bitten creatures in their gay court dresses, gaping with licking lips and avid eyes at that one precious scrap of food.



It was difficult for the executioners to separate those two lovers at first, for they had

"Well, you know the rest. Alessandro's faith in his elemental was justified. Guiccardini says that it was difficult for the men who were to take them to execution to separate them at first—they had torn and entwined their way into such a deadly knot in their death grapple for the unique possession of that one small piece of bread. And the bread was spoilt between them; neither got any good of it. And yet if this elemental love of theirs had been greater than elemental hunger for one half-hour—for Alessandro was just enough to provide that time limit—well, they both would have had their heart's desire forever and been 'Most Faithful In Love.' Well?"

He looked at Latimer with narrowed, lambent eyes.

"Alessandro was a mad monster—a cruel devil!" said Latimer shakily.

"Perhaps—but he was also a practical man. And in this case a fair one. He merely wished to see if their professions had any value. If they had, he stood ready to reward them very magnificently. But they proved to have no value at all."

"It wasn't a fair test—not by any means a fair test!" said Latimer. "Starvation—death by starvation—that was too much, too horrible. And then suddenly giving them food! And then just because they lost their heads for a moment—"

"They—lost their heads." Slake smiled. "But before they lost them they had proved in their own persons that hunger is greater than love. The test was too hard for them, you say—but a few minutes ago you were saying with apparent conviction

that *no* test could be too hard. At all events, I think I have proved my point."

"No!" said Latimer rebelliously. "They would have died for each other—of course they would—even Guiccardini admits that. It was the means—the dragging out—"

"It was hunger. The elemental. They acted as any two people would have acted. Oh, I don't blame them, believe me! For myself, I should have acted in precisely the same way. Except that I think I would have managed to get the piece of bread." He smiled. "Yes, I think I would have. Oh, they were in love, of course they were—probably more in love than most people dare to be now! But their love, whatever its dimensions, was smaller than their hunger. Their hunger ate them up. Any two would have been the same."

He settled back more comfortably.

"Any two would *not*," said Latimer violently. "They failed because their love wasn't big enough. Certainly. But some people would have been big enough—some loves would! You *can't*—" and he hesitated and stopped.

The purr had come back into Slake's voice.

"Then I haven't convinced you—even by such a perfect instance? That seems odd. Some people would have been big enough, you say. I wonder, I very much wonder, Mr. Latimer, just what people you mean."

"Oh—dozens!" said Latimer vaguely. "Most people," he went on stoutly, "or half of them at any rate. Even now."





entwined themselves into a death grapple over that one small piece of bread.

"You have a singular confidence in human nature, Mr. Latimer. So some people—half of the people one meets on the street, perhaps—would be able to withstand Alessandro's test successfully—now. How human nature must have improved since the Sixteenth Century! Well—an instance—one instance at least?"

"Oh, of course I can't give you that particular kind of an instance!" said Latimer impatiently. "Those things don't happen now—we've got rid of Alessandros. But I'd be willing to bet that of a dozen people—a dozen engaged or married couples, I mean, that I happen to know—half of them at least would make Alessandro's test look sick if he tried it on."

"Yes," said Slake softly. "Yes." Then he stiffened suddenly in his chair. "Would you?"

Latimer was taken completely aback. If the question had come at the beginning of the conversation he would merely have treated it as an insult, but now he was both too angry at Slake and too interested in trying to refute him for that.

"Why, I don't know, Mr. Slake—why—why the premise is preposterous, of course! Such a thing couldn't happen now—"

"But suppose it could, Mr. Latimer? Suppose it could?"

That particular thick sleekness of scorn was the last drop of fuel on the silent, intense flame of Latimer's internal wrath.

"Yes!" he said defiantly, and then wondered why on earth he had said it.

"You would be willing to wager—your future professorship, say—on your and the one woman's ability to withstand Alessandro's test? You are wholly certain of that?"

"Yes," said Latimer again and more composedly. At least he had managed to take most of the contempt out of Slake's slow voice.

"You are absolutely sure of yourself—and the lady in question?"

"Absolutely!" Latimer smiled. Catherine and himself—how ridiculous! Why, with them a thing like Alessandro's test would be something to joke about—they were so sure.

"Very well, then—suppose we try it," said Slake amazingly. Latimer gasped.

"Wha-a-a!"

Slake held up his hand.

"No, really, I am not suggesting anything so impossible as that seems. The stakes first—let me see, the stakes!" He smiled freezingly.

"Your idea would be so fantastic—if it weren't so insolent, Mr. Slake—"

"The stakes," Slake went on unheeding, "as I am not Alessandro—and a great pity it is—I can hardly request you to put up your lives for a forfeit. A written promise from you that you would give up your present career forever and enter any business I wished you to at a salary entirely at my own discretion—that would be quite sufficient, in case either one of you—failed! From the lady, I should, naturally, require no promise at all—the loss of your career would be quite sufficient to make you both wholly miserable for a number of years in case you married—if you did marry—which, if either of you failed in such a test, I should hardly imagine you would care to do."

He paused for Latimer to speak, but Latimer seemed to have no words.

"Should the test be withstood successfully—and I should not require a longer period than twenty minutes for its actual duration—a check for ten thousand dollars to be delivered to you the same day."

He smiled again. Latimer shivered. Ten thousand dollars! That meant that he and Catherine could marry at once instead of waiting another year; they had been engaged a year already. It meant leisure for research—to do the work that he wanted. It meant a home and children, being able to afford to have children safely, without fear, without every summer spent in hack tutoring, without Catherine's being worn to the bone by the pinching inexorable grip of their "honorable" poverty. It meant security; it meant everything that both of them wanted most in life. Ten thousand dollars! He sighed tiredly—it was like John Slake to dangle all these things like a golden feather so casually, so nearly in reach of his hands, so utterly and completely on conditions that he could never accept. If he had only required some other conditions—any other ones—

"I suppose you think you have the right to play practical jokes of this sort on your employees, Mr. Slake," he stammered. "Or rather you haven't the right but you seem to have the power. The thing is utterly impossible, of course. Even supposing I accepted—which I wouldn't and couldn't—you have neither the power nor the means—"

"Power? Means? My dear Mr. Latimer, you are hardly flattering!"

"But this is the Twentieth Century!" said Latimer, platitudinously.

"The Twentieth Century. Exactly. That is why. The century of all centuries where money is power. I made a rather interesting statistical computation a year or so ago." He smiled. "As to the legal penalties I should have incurred for—a few little things I have found it necessary to do at one time or another. They amounted, in the aggregate, to a prison sentence of one hundred and fourteen years."

He leaned forward, looking at Latimer intently. The sheer force and will of him seemed to flow into the other man's body like an electric wave.

"My servants are—well trained," he said slowly. "They should be—at their salaries. The better ones—and I have several—are quite beyond the possibility of surprise at any whim I may happen to wish carried out. Well!

"On the third story there is a little suite of sound proof rooms—a miniature apartment—seven rooms in all. I use it whenever a problem chances to come up that I wish to think over entirely undisturbed. The meals are sent up on a dumb-waiter—the species of waiter that, on the whole, I prefer. We could carry out our little experiment there in perfect peace." He waved his hands defensively in the air.

"Oh, I shouldn't make the conditions nearly as hard as Alessandro's! The glass screen was a pretty idea but a little—expensive. I could have a window put in that would do just as well. The apartment is sizable enough—I should stay in it, of course, for the duration of the experiment. Meals would be sent up from the kitchen for three."

He grinned like a dog.

"But naturally only one person could eat them—myself. You would be in one room, the young lady in the room adjoining. The rest of the apartment would be mine. You would not have food—but water in any quantity would be yours at your convenience. As for cleanliness, I think I could arrange matters so that you would have a bathroom apiece. In consideration of the fact that neither of you, in all probability, possesses a Renaissance physique, I would be perfectly willing to shorten the time to seven days. Just consider!" He seemed to be speaking very

earnestly. "A seven days' fast—a thing any one of a score of health cranks undergo voluntarily several times a year. A fast that no reputable early Christian hermit or modern explorer would treat as anything but a joke.

"There was that Irishman—the Lord Mayor of Cork. He lasted—how long was it? Almost a month, I believe—nearly five times the paltry number of hours I am asking you to hold out. And, moreover, if you will permit me, a fast with every modern convenience at your disposal in a well lighted, well heated apartment—for I should differ from some of Alessandro's



Latimer rested on all fours for a moment, while a wave of fierce relief swept

quaintest conceits in that respect. Books?" he ruminated. "I shall consider whether I could allow you books. Anything else in reason, certainly. Well, Mr. Latimer, you accept, of course?"

"Of course *not!*" said Latimer firmly.

"Really, but why? Ten thousand dollars for one week's lack of occupation! You will never have a chance like that in all your life. And of course you are sure of winning or we would never have had any argument. Ten thousand dollars *now*, when life is just beginning for both of you, when you need money *more* than you will ever need it again! Ten—thousand—dollars!" His voice was as gradual and insistent as the pulsing throb of a drum.

"But what in God's name would you expect to get out of your ridiculous proposal?" said Latimer suddenly, out of an overmastering curiosity. Slake sank back in his chair again. His eyes filmed like a preying eagle's.

"Amusement," he said slowly. "A man as rich as I am, Mr. Latimer, is the hardest person under the sky to amuse. He has tasted most things too early. In the old days there were gladiatorial games for such men—and that was as it should be. You see, that is always amusing—that one thing. One can be bored ineffably by all other things in the world but not by that. The struggle of life against elemental chance. The struggle of life to live!" His voice sank to a cruel cadence.

"To look on—to see men fighting with the paltry weapons of men against something too strong to conquer—bleeding—dying."

"And I refuse," said Latimer for the last time. He rose. "I really must be going to bed now, Mr. Slake. I have some correspondence to attend to—" his voice trailed off uncertainly. Slake remained seated, his eyes smoldering still with that vision of proud life beaten into the dust by the odds against it which his words had conjured up.

"You will always remember this, though—when you're poor and at your wits' end," he said sardonically. "That you might have had ten thousand dollars, for the asking—in exchange for a little courage."

"Perhaps I shall."

Latimer was past caring for Slake's purr of mockery now. "I'll be frank, Mr. Slake—if you'd made your insane offer to myself alone—I'd have jumped at it." He laughed.

"But, as it is—"

"Of course," Slake purred, "of course! The young lady. She could not bear it—of course. Well, perhaps it is just as well, Mr. Latimer. You will be able to keep a few of your youthful illusions—for a time." He rose, giving his hand.

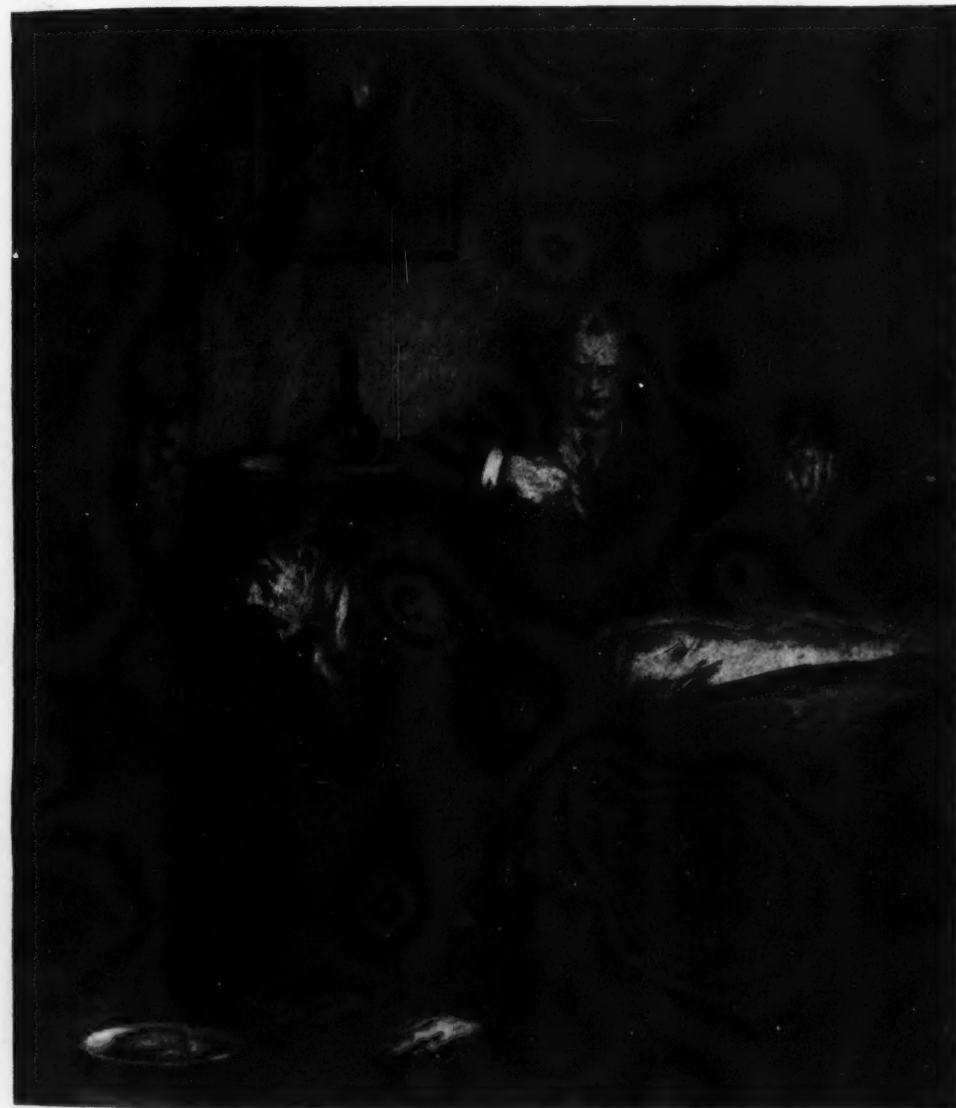
"By the way, I hope you will give my sincerest congratulations to Miss—to Miss—"

"Vane—Catherine Vane," said Latimer mechanically. His only thought at the moment was how soon he could get out of the room.

"Miss Vane. Not one of the Newport Vane's, I presume? There were Vane's in Philadelphia, but I really don't seem to recall—" He hesitated maliciously.

"Oh, you wouldn't know!" said Latimer in a burst of careless irritation. "She's working up at Columbia—in the Secretary's office." Then he stopped nervously. Why had he said that?

"Miss Catherine Vane, the Secretary's Office, Columbia University." Slake produced a gold pencil and made a note on his cuff. His eyes held



through him. The woman was not strong enough to get down and fight him for that food!

He looked at the tablecloth as if the blood he was speaking of lay on it like a stain. "That is—most intensely amusing," he said, a little hoarsely. "And what I have proposed, Mr. Latimer, is just such a spectacle. On a small scale of course—but that would make it only the more poignant. The terror, the fear, the—the amusement would be refined and thrice refined. And besides." He changed again.

"I admire your brains, Mr. Latimer," he said briskly. "I could use you. If I could be sure of utter obedience from you, you might make me a very valuable—servant—in many ways. But anything I offered you now in reason you would refuse—you are such a stubborn young man, so sure of your own career. Should you lose—I would have that obedience. Oh, you're a gentleman—you wouldn't break your word! I should have the absolute use of you—like an extra finger—for, say, ten years. That gamble, you see—why that would double the amusement. Well, I offer."

Latimer straightly; the chill flame in them burned higher.

"What are you doing?" said Latimer, suddenly, in a stifled, terrified voice.

Slake gestured in the air.

"Oh nothing, Mr. Latimer, nothing! Merely a habit of mine—a notation—a little reminder. You see," his eyes glittered with bright and dancing flecks, "you see I have a whim—a whim of wishing to meet Miss Catherine Vane in person. I should like very much indeed, since you are so obdurate, to find out what she will say to this trifling experiment of mine!"

## II

LATIMER looked stupidly for what seemed to him a very long time at the little white dints his teeth had just made in the flesh of his wrist. An uncontrollable shudder went over his



body. It was impossible—he couldn't have come to *that* stage yet when it was only the fourth day of the fast.

He forced his eyes up and away from those sinister pale markings—away and around the walls of the neat, luxuriously decorated box of a room that those eyes knew already so dully and completely by heart. The wall paper was covered with bluebirds. There were twenty-one birds to each wall, eighty-four to the room; eighty-four bluebirds perched upon eighty-four sprays of some species of blue shrub. Every bird was exactly like every other bird—eighty-four bluebirds that he had counted so many times.

He was sane. He was completely sane. If he had bitten his arm just then, it was nervousness, that was all—pure nervousness and wondering if Catherine, too, suffered under this shameful, continual pain like the pressure of a dull, thick knife against the pit of his stomach. Catherine. And Catherine, too, was sane. Quite sane. Quite sane—still.

He thought with horrible doubt: "Catherine Vane is sane, is sane. Catherine Vane is sane, is sane."

The foolish rhyme started beating in his mind like the noise of a broken bell. He stopped it with a griping effort of will. No more of *that* either. They both of them were sane—and in three days it would all be over.

He counted all the bluebirds on the wall that was nearest him again and carefully. Twenty-one! There was always that haunting thing inside his brain that kept telling him that some day there might be twenty, or twenty-two. And after that—

No more of *that*, Sherwood Latimer! No more of *that*, at all!

Presently he would get up and go over to the window and look at Catherine. That would help. And after that, presently, he would read.

Slake saw them twice a day; that had been in the contract. How many times had Slake been in already, then? He counted slowly. Seven times. He would come again in an hour—it must be just about an hour—after the daylight in the room had died and the electric lights were on. Seven times. That meant four days. Eight times would mean four days, too, but nine times and ten times would mean five days. He still knew what day it was. That was very good.

His mind kept going back to the strangeness—the utter strangeness of the last two weeks. He and Catherine—Catherine and he. Catherine Vane and Sherwood Latimer, two ordinary, usual, everyday young people—and Slake's ruddy face looking down at them forever as the moon looks down on people in hell—the moon that makes people go mad. Go mad and do things like this.

Slake's smooth voice, pulsing, insistent, possessed with incredible power, softly possessed as liquid metal is possessed with flame. That voice always in their ears like the beat of the sea—calling to them—making them crumble—until like drugged birds they did the fantastic thing which that voice required. Slake's long delicate fingers gripping hold of them, moving them like checkers across a board—because they must always be amused and in motion or their power would fail them, those hands—till at last he and Catherine lay as light and pitiless in the hands as pieces of painted wood, and the hands did with them what they desired, according to their sport.

Catherine had wanted to do this—that had been the only reason. Catherine had been so sure. He remembered her laughing voice: "Why Sherry, darling, just *think*. It's everything we want, Sherry, everything *now*, and it's *ours* if we only have the little courage to take it." The little little courage. Latimer grinned wryly. It was going to take a good deal more than that.

The last straw had been when Slake had simply said that he would be willing, if necessary, to carry out his damnable experiment with Catherine alone; conditions might have to be altered but she should have the same terms. Of course that had settled Catherine—she had such clear courage. And she'd told him—perfectly seriously—how strange women were, how marvelously strange!—that she'd rather have it that way because then she'd be the only person to do any suffering and it would all be for both of them. And then, of course—

It must have been a paralysis of will on his part, he reflected grimly. Will! He had always been credited with a strong will, too. But no man who had the will of a vertebrate animal would have let the person he loved go through a thing like this with him—even for a week—even if neither of them had been able to imagine it would be anything like this. He was mud, that was what he was. A thing made out of mud that happened to be wearing clothes.

All the same he knew, as he knew that he had eyes, that Catherine, somehow, would have carried this deathly business

through alone if he hadn't finally accepted it for both of them. Because she loved him. Oh, how *pitiful*! He closed his eyes.

What power there was in Slake—what a deadly cruelty of jesting power! Those contracts—those contracts had been so clever. Slake had had them drawn up, of course. All the terrible meaning in them hidden away under a drift of legal, ordinary sounding phrases. They were very subtle too, very binding. In consideration of a task to be performed, Sherwood Latimer and Catherine Vane were to receive ten thousand dollars. If the task were not performed—the forfeit clause. The unspecified task.

Setting a definite date for the performance. The clause stating that in case both asked to be relieved of the task before it was completed the forfeit clause should come into operation at once—but that neither could be released without full written consent from the other. Oh, Slake was a clever devil! He would doubtless hold places of high trust when he got to hell.

Of course, possibly, the contracts might not hold. If the nature of the task were explained. But nobody could ever believe the explanation. And even if they did—Latimer sighed hopelessly. The law, as he knew it, took little account of the meanings of things—only the forms. And besides—trying to break those contracts—they—against Slake and his millions? Latimer knew the nature of the man too well. He would be prepared to spend incredible sums to carry out his jest. And Latimer and Catherine had no money to spend.

They were in it now, in it like flies on a piece of fly paper. They must just stick it out—that was all. The bitterness was, he thought distractedly, that, even if they won, he could wear himself to the quick for Catherine all the rest of his life and yet never make up for these seven days.

If they won! For a moment that gilded possibility touched his tired mind as lightly as blowing air. If they only won. They had to win, now.

There was nobody like Catherine; there never could be. She had been able to make a joke of it, the hour before they started—able to make him make a joke of it, too. He remembered her voice, quoting silverly, mockingly, poignantly out of one of their best-loved poets:

Why, sweet my love, no fear!  
The Gascon frontier is so near,  
A week—"

So near. So utterly, intolerably far.

She had laughed even when Slake explained the arrangements, his hands moving backward and forward as he spoke like the needling thrust and retraction of the claws of a cat.

"You will have one slight inconvenience, I fear," he had said. "Beside the fact that your only outlook is on a rather unattractive airshaft, I cannot, of course, allow either of you either soap or tooth paste—and I am very sorry. But they are—edible, unfortunately." And he had smiled.

And again: "You will notice that I have provided you each with a Bible, a Koran, some volumes of the Zend-Avesta and other religious works—really quite a compact small library apiece. You can employ yourselves most profitably, no doubt, in making a comparative study of various forms of belief."

Two ordinary human beings, accustomed to three meals a day, but physically fit enough—not weaklings, either of them. It seemed rather ridiculous to think that they couldn't hold out seven days without food. To people who didn't have to do it, that was.

The second day had been worse than this in some ways. The mere physical pain had been sharper. Now it was only constant; eternally constant, eternally heavy—a thick sort of nibbling like the continual but never violent gnawing of blunted iron teeth. But the second day, the giddiness had not really begun till toward the end. The giddiness was bad. It made your body feel light all over like cork, and fierce in intermittent spurts as if it were filled with burning air. It made your mind too babyishly pleased or irritated with small things like creases in the carpet.

He would go and see Catherine now. He could walk quite firmly if he tried, though his legs felt queerly unsubstantial and brittle. Peanut-brittle legs. He chuckled weakly. He would go and see Catherine.

He started tapping like a woodpecker at his side of the double window of netted glass. The window was small and high up—you had to stand your height to look through it. Pretty soon you might not be able to stand—even now standing seemed to tire you immensely for some odd reason. He had not noticed the clever position of the window at first. But that was Slake.

Catherine was sitting in a low chair, (Continued on page 94)

*FÊTED by kings  
and queens—ac-  
claimed throughout  
Europe and Amer-  
ica as the most beau-  
tiful, most charming  
woman of the stage  
—Lillian Russell  
has never lost the  
fine simplicity of her  
Iowa girlhood, of  
her convent days.*

*In this  
instalment  
of her story*

*LILLIAN RUSSELL tells*



*THAT is her  
charm—her un-  
spoiled point of view  
of life and people, of  
the things that count  
and the things that  
don't. And that is  
why her "Reminis-  
cences" make the  
most absorbing fem-  
inine autobiography  
ever published.*

*How  
It Feels  
To Be a Star*

THE next contract into which I entered was of the greatest importance to me and to my career as it was the very first engagement I had ever made whereby I was to be the only star. I considered it a theatrical milestone in my life.

Mr. T. Henry French, son of the celebrated play broker, Samuel P. French, and manager of the Broadway Theater and the Garden Theater in Madison Square, was my manager. Mr. French signed a contract with me for two years, to star in comic opera, our opening vehicle to be *La Cigale*, the libretto by Frank Burnand, of London *Punch*, and music by Edwin Audran, of Paris. This opera had had a phenomenal run in London and was just starting on its second year there.

We did a most unconventional thing by raising the price of seats to two dollars. Until this production, theater tickets had been the same price for many years, one dollar and a half, each. I received fifteen per cent of everything that was sold in the theater; seats, photographs, music and even the cloak room charges. I had a guarantee of \$1500 per week, but my share never fell below \$2300 per week.

*La Cigale* was taken from La Fontaine's fable of the grasshopper and the ant. I played Marton, the grasshopper, the poor little *cigale* who would not work and save for the winter, but played and sang the whole year through, while her sister, the ant, worked all summer to lay by for the winter.

Madame Sarah Bernhardt attended the second performance of *La Cigale*. After the performance she came back to my dressing room to compliment me upon my interpretation and the management for their great production. The next day she sent me the fable of *La Cigale et La Fourmi* written on a card in her own delicate handwriting, with her signature attached. This little card I have treasured all my life.

*La Cigale* being an exacting rôle from a dramatic standpoint, aside from its wonderful musical qualities, I was most ambitious to show the public that I could act as well as sing.

I have always been an advocate of continual study, and when I realized that I might make a success as an actress as well as a singer, I set about to engage some clever actress to assist me in portraying this new rôle. No singer or actress can progress in her profession unless she works continually.

There are many, unfortunately, who make one hit in an actor-proof part. They gain the appreciation of the public and the commendation of the critics, which assures them a most complimentary following. If the play runs a season, the actress's name goes up in front of the theater in electric lights. It is either her Waterloo or her beacon light to a career. She alone must choose. Very few of these meteoric successes prove lasting. Were it not that I would not care to offend a number of now forgotten two-season stars, I would mention many names that would recall plays that were most entertaining to the public.

Being a professional of so many years in the memory of the theater-going public, I am continually asked by nonprofessionals—what has become of this star and that star of a one or two season success. One season a star in the effulgence, and the second season a star fallen. When the public makes a star—and the public is the only maker of any real star—it enjoys seeing that star live up to the promises of his or her first success, and continue to improve as did Miss Maude Adams, Miss Julia Marlowe, Miss Viola Allen, Miss Laurette Taylor, Miss Jane Cowl, Miss Elsie Janis, Miss Blanche Bates, and a very few others. The public must know now, if they did not know ere this, that these women have worked unceasingly from every angle of their profession to make each individual success as pronounced as their first one.

The great and much admired Mrs. Scott Siddons was available as a teacher and she gave me many hours of her valuable time. She directed my rehearsals at home, and spent many hours in criticizing my performances in the theater. With her little pad and pencil she took notes of my every fault. I



A scene from *Girofle-Girofla* which we played with great success in Chicago during the World's Fair.

was a devoted pupil of this wonderful instructor. Of course, I had my dear Louisa Cappiani to coach me in the music.

Never shall I forget the opening night of *La Cigale*. A *Star at last!* Every seat had been sold at auction. I felt the friendship of every soul in the audience. They desired my success and were there to share in its culmination. My great hope, my earnest prayer, was that I could live up to their belief in me and success was mine—unqualified! It was such a success that I was unconscious of any detail. After the performance the musical conductor came back to my dressing room and asked me, "What was wrong with the music, Miss Russell; you never looked at me once tonight?" I called to him: "It was wonderful. It was all so harmonious—conductor, orchestra, and singer—that I didn't know there was an orchestra; that is the best compliment I can pay you, Mr. Jesse Williams."

The second season of *La Cigale* the whole company left New York early in September for California by a special train. Perhaps this was the most extravagant opening of a season that had ever been known up to that time, as we took with us not only a private car for our party—Mr. French and his daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Barker, my mother, my maid, and myself—but we had three Pullman cars, two coaches and four baggage cars.

We carried not only the *La Cigale* production, but an entirely new production of *The Mountebanks*, a new opera by W. S. Gilbert and Mr. Alfred Cellier. This was the first opera Mr. Gilbert had written after his break with Sir Arthur Sullivan. I don't believe Mr. Gilbert had ever written with anyone except Sir Arthur as long as he lived. And strange to say, Mr. Cellier, who composed the music to *The Mountebanks*, died before he had an opportunity to write another opera with Gilbert.

We opened our season in San Francisco with *La Cigale*, which delighted our friends out there. We then produced *The Mountebanks*, but they did not fully realize until we had left California that we had given them a perfectly new opera from the pens of W. S. Gilbert and Alfred Cellier, and a perfectly new production of scenery and costumes that had come directly from England, and that we had brought Mr. Richard Barker from London for this California production. They liked *The Mountebanks*, but they didn't seem sure of it. It had not the stamp of a New York success attached to it, which is an enormous asset to any opera or play sent across country.

We played back East and produced *The Mountebanks* in New York, in February, at the Garden Theater. New York received

the new opera gratefully and graciously, just as it had always received any good play and production that I had ever given.

We had a contract to play three operas in our four months' run in Chicago during the World's Fair; therefore Mr. French selected *Girofle-Girofla* for the third production, and we put it into rehearsal while we were playing *The Mountebanks*.

One night while I was playing in *The Mountebanks* at the Garden Theater, I had an absolute lapse of memory in the middle of a performance. I had been doing a very foolish thing. We were rehearsing the opera *Girofle-Girofla*, which we intended to play in Chicago later. As I had no change of costume between the first and second acts of *The Mountebanks* and my first entrance in the second act was fifteen minutes after the rise of the curtain—I filled in the time by learning one of my new songs in French.

While I was studying in my dressing room my call came. I heard the call-boy say, "Miss Russell, your entrance." I flew out of the dressing room on to the stage. I heard some music, saw Mr. Coffin, the tenor, and stood still, perfectly dumb! I didn't know whether I was still in the middle of the first act or the start of the second act! Mr. Jesse Williams, the musical conductor, was holding his baton in the air, waiting for a cue.

I had no idea of the situation, so I just stepped down to the footlights and told the audience that I had a head full of French lyrics, which I had absorbed from a song in the opera I was studying for the next production; and if Mr. Coffin would give the music cue and start the number, I would find myself, and continue the performance. The audience was delightful and encouraging, and Mr. Coffin started his verse of the duet. Before he had sung a phrase I was in the part again and all went smoothly after that. I learned my lesson, and was never so foolish as to study one opera in the theater while I was playing another.

After our run in New York, we went directly to Chicago. We played sixteen weeks at the Columbia Theater with three operas for our repertoire: *La Cigale*, *The Mountebanks*, and *Girofle-Girofla*.

The story of the twin sisters, Girofle and Girofla, was most interesting, and the music was the most beautiful imaginable. From the *Dearest Papa* number to the *Drinking Song*, and from *My Girofle, My Bride*, the duet between the two husbands, Mourzouk and Marasquin, at the end of the second act where Girofle, between them, is playing both brides, it is irresistible.

No one will ever forget the *Drinking Song*, it was the big number of the second act. Eight pages were dressed in blue



for Girofle, and eight were dressed in pink for Girofla. In the punch bowl in the center of the stage was a "stage punch" which consisted of soft sand saturated with alcohol. I had to light the punch at the beginning of the song, and fill the glasses for the pages as it burned all through the *Drinking Song* while I sang, "See how it sparkles, this drink divine, and all its luster our eyes out-shine." We made an exit after this song by running up a long staircase at the back of the stage. But we were recalled over and over again, until finally I sang it in French for absolutely the last encore.

There is no question but that scene was the greatest of its day, and has never been surpassed by any stage manager and artist up to the date of this writing—1921. And I am not offering any bouquets to myself in making this statement. It was all due to the development of an imagination of a great stage director and an obedient star.

I had a few lines to say before I sang the *Drinking Song* while I was opening a small bottle of champagne. I held the bottle up, and said "This looks like champagne." Then I pulled the cork, and said, "It smells like champagne." Then as I sipped it, I said, "It tastes like champagne." And holding the glass high in the air, I said, "It is champagne."

The result was that every dealer in champagne who came to the World's Fair in Chicago and came to the theater sent me a case of champagne, until my dressing room and the hallways looked like a small wine cellar. I drank very little myself. I gave away as much as I could, and gave a banquet to the chorus people. They drank what they wished of it, but when I left Chicago I had to give away many cases to the stage hands, the electricians, and firemen. Lucky Girofle! No singer in the world, however wonderfully she might sing that *Drinking Song* today, could have the successful result I had in those days. But perhaps it is best that Prohibition has come to stay.

Of course, during the World's Fair in Chicago, we were extensively entertained everywhere. I had taken a house on South Park Avenue, and I had a sumptuous dressing room in the Columbia Theater, with everything to make me comfortable there.

I met everyone I knew in America and many from Europe at the World's Fair, and I went frequently to the Fair grounds. There were many lunch parties given out there, and many dinners and banquets given in the city. A story about Mr. Chauncey Depew comes to my mind in thinking of this engagement.

I was attending a party given to me at the Hotel Richelieu one Sunday evening, at which there were present such celebrities as General Miles,



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FROM THE DAVIS  
COLLECTION

Two of my costumes in *The Grand Duchess*, a great success in America. Sir Charles Wyndham, who owned the English rights,

would not let us play it in London except in his own theater, which was too small.

Colonel Cody, Colonel Thomas Ochiltree, the French Commissioner and Admiral of the French Navy, Marquis de Ballancourt, the Turkish Commissioner, Fahri Bey, Mr. Hubert Vos, the great Dutch artist, Mr. T. Henry French, and many well known professionals playing in the different theaters.

Mr. Depew entered just after we had started to dine. He shook hands with a few people he knew, and took a seat beside me. After dinner, he made a speech which was interspersed with some most amusing stories. Just as he was finishing, a bellboy came for him and said, "Mr. Depew they are waiting for you in the banquet hall." Mr. Depew looked dazed. He looked at me, Colonel Ochiltree and the others, and said:

"Isn't this the banquet? I was supposed to speak at a banquet here."

I replied:

"Well, you did speak, and most charmingly, Mr. Depew; but we didn't know you were coming; in fact, we didn't know you were in this city, or we should have been delighted to invite you, and we thank you for coming."

We all had a good laugh, for Mr. Depew had to go upstairs make his speech, and repeat his stories at another banquet; but I am sure he had no more appreciative an audience.

I think the best portrait ever made of me was sketched in



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FROM THE DAVIS  
COLLECTION

pastel by the great artist, Hubert Vos, of Holland, on the biscuit-colored plaster walls of the dining room in the quarters of the French Commission at the World's Fair. This charming artist made a veritable art gallery of celebrities on those walls. But, alas, that art was lost to all but our memories as there was no way of preserving any of it.

Our wonderful host, the Marquis de Ballancourt could speak scarcely a word of English. His vocabulary consisted of a greeting, "Charmed to make your acquaintance," and the words of the most prominent sign at the Fair which he learned but did not understand: "Gentlemen will not—loafers must not—spit on the floor." Later when I was in England playing at Henry Irving's Theater, I received on the opening night, a cable from Aix-les-Bains from the Marquis, half in French and half in English: "I am wishing you great success in your new play, gentlemen will not, loafers must not, spit on the floor. Ballancourt."

Near the close of the Chicago World's Fair engagement, Mr. George Lederer came to see me relative to an engagement. He assured me that he had an operetta which he knew I would like. It was *Princess Nicotine*, by Charles Byrne and Louis Harrison, with music by William Furst. He told me he had a chance to get the Casino for its production. He asked:

"If I do, will you sign a contract with me for next season?"

I looked up quickly and said:

"Yes, if you can get the Casino for two or three years I will sign a contract with you to play there."

The music of *Princess Nicotine*, which opened in New York in November 1893, was more exacting than that of many grand operas. Madame Melba came to see the opera one evening while we were playing at the Casino. After the performance she called upon me in my dressing room and complimented me upon my work. She cautioned me to save my voice. She said she saved her high C's most carefully, and if she sang six of them a week, she was doing all she could. She counted mine in *Princess Nicotine* and found that I sang eight C's at every performance—and I sang seven times a week.

I was delighted at her interest in me, took her advice, and cut out two or three C's in future performances. I considered it a charming compliment for a grand opera prima donna to come to hear a comic opera prima donna and treat her so graciously.

In the Casino days I became acquainted with many of the grand opera prima donnas. Madame Lilli Lehman, Madame Lillian Nordica, Madame Emma Calvé, Madame Emma Eames, and Madame Sembrich were all friends to me, and they all advised me to study for grand opera. But I considered the time I would lose here in America, just at the start of my career, and the expense of two years in Italy, and I decided that I could study here and be the first in my line of work; whereas I might return from abroad, after devoting two years to study for grand opera, and perhaps find myself only a third or fourth rate prima donna. It is better to be the best in your own line, than the second or third in another line.

During that engagement, Miss Marie Dressler, who was in the cast, was receiving only \$40.00 a week. Why she signed with George Lederer for that salary, I never could find out. One night Marie came to my dressing room and announced:

"I simply can't get along on this salary, Miss Russell."

"Why not strike?" said I.

"Strike?" she asked, "How?"

"How much money do you want?" I asked.

She answered, "I think I am worth a hundred a week."

I replied: "You certainly are, for you have made a hit in this play. Will you be guided by me?"

She nodded.

"Then go and tell George Lederer that you must have a hundred dollars a week from now on, or you will not appear tonight."

She protested feebly, then finally agreed to give him her ultimatum.

Shortly after she left my room, Lederer rushed into my dressing room: "What do you think of that?" he demanded. "Marie Dressler wants a hundred dollars and says she won't play tonight unless I give it to her." "Are you going to do it?" I asked. "I am not," he said angrily. "She can stay away from the theater forever. I will have a new woman tonight."

"Oh, no!" I said as smoothly as I could. "We can't have a new woman tonight. I am not going to have my performance ruined completely. You must get Miss Dressler back somehow, otherwise I can't play, and remember, my contract states you cannot discharge anyone without my permission." That was, I think, the only bit of temperament I ever deliberately dis-

played, and it worked beautifully, for Marie received her hundred a week and we laughed over it later.

At the end of the run of *Princess Nicotine*, Mr. Lederer revived *Girofle-Girofla* at the Casino, with the same cast we had for *Princess Nicotine*, with the added attraction of William Pruette as Mourzouk. Miss Marie Dressler played Aurora, and Louis Harrison played Bolero.

It was then that Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau, who were the managers of the grand opera at the Metropolitan Opera House, offered me a contract to play a repertoire of French operas, opening in London with the *The Grand Duchess*.

I was willing and anxious for a change, and accepted a contract for two years, and we all sailed away to London to produce *The Grand Duchess* in Henry Irving's Lyceum Theater in London, in the same sumptuous style in which we had produced it at the Casino in New York.

We arrived in London with several artists who had played in the American production. We were all elated with our prospects, and confident that we were going to have easy sailing into a great success, when we discovered that Sir Charles Wyndham owned all of the English rights to *The Grand Duchess*. Mr. Abbey asked me to go with him to call upon Sir Charles and arrange to secure the rights from him for our production. We called upon him at his theater by appointment. We were entertained at tea by Sir Charles, and after twenty minutes or more of handing verbal bouquets to each other, we reached the important matter of our visit, *The Grand Duchess*.

Mr. Abbey told in detail about our proposed production, and of the enormous expense we would incur for costumes and scenery. He hoped Sir Charles would sell us outright the English rights of the opera, or at least take a handsome percentage on the gross receipts. Sir Charles let Mr. Abbey entertain him with every argument that an American business man could draw from his imagination. Then he offered us more tea, and assured us that the crumpets were the best in England.

Mr. Abbey became impatient, so Sir Charles addressed his conversation to me.

"Have you been in my theater, Miss Russell?"

I said I had, and had enjoyed his portrayal of David Garrick more than I could express. He bowed suavely and accepted the compliment graciously.

"Don't you think it would be a good theater for a production like *The Grand Duchess*?"

I replied, "The Garrick Theater is so small, Sir Charles, that it could not hold enough money to pay us for coming over here and putting on so sumptuous a production. You know we require soldiers, horses, and a military chorus. How would you get the horses down those three flights of stairs to the stage?"

"Oh," he said, "you can cut out the horses and reduce the number of soldiers, lessen your number of chorus people."

Then he treated me to that old bromide; "The public only wants Lillian Russell." "But," I said, "they want Lillian Russell in a proper setting." Our interview ended in a quiet but conclusive speech given with unquestionable English diplomatic and grammatical effect by Sir Charles Wyndham, as follows: "My dear Miss Russell and Mr. Abbey: I have a theater; I have all the English rights to *The Grand Duchess*. If you will produce *The Grand Duchess* in my theater, I shall be charmed and delighted to let you have it; but I will not have it produced at any other theater in London."

But Mr. Abbey was not discouraged. He had come to England to produce an opera, and he was going to produce one—even if he had to write it himself. For several days he searched among all available vehicles, trying to find one suitable for his important American cast. Shortly he came to me hopefully. "Jakobowski, the composer of *Erminie* has an opera he calls *The Queen of Brilliants*. Brandon Thomas has written the book which has only two acts completed," he said. "He can write the last act while we are rehearsing, and we will put it on."

In spite of the hurry in its preparation, however, *The Queen of Brilliants* was a finished production. The American spirit with which it was rehearsed, directed, and presented, was a topic of interest for weeks in the theater circles, especially among the critics. We engaged three English comedians; Mr. Arthur Williams, Mr. John Le Hay, and Mr. George Honey. From America we brought Mr. Hubert Wilke, Mr. Owen Westford, Miss Annie Meyers, Miss Susan Westford, and Mr. Paul Steindorff, our musical conductor.

As producer, Mr. Abbey engaged a famous figure of the English theatre, Sir Augustus Harris. He was a brilliant son of a brilliant cockney father. Like his father, the first Augustus, Sir Augustus had begun at the very (Continued on page 90)

**THERE** is  
one human  
failing that all  
of us have in  
common with—

# The Woman who Cheated

by  
**RITA WEIMAN**

Illustrations by Harrison Fisher



Natalie Gleason  
was unconscious  
that any eyes  
were upon her.

INTO the gentle quiet of five o'clock in a restaurant unfrequented by habitual tea dancers, came a woman with searching eyes and lips eagerly parted. The eyes were the dense blue of late afternoon merging into night. The lips were a red untouched by rouge, with a suggestion of softness even to the casual observer. But with Natalie Gleason no observer could be casual. She was the sort of woman men stare at and women imitate.

Had she been an actress, the quality of her must have commanded a vogue that would have expressed itself in soaps, powders and coifs named for her. Being Mrs. Anthony Chester Gleason of the Back Bay section of Boston, her picture merely appeared occasionally in magazines that demanded a pedigree with their reproductions and the world that studies the society column of every day scarcely knew her name.

The few seated at tables, if they were not too absorbed in one another, noticed a woman who moved with that boneless grace which expresses absolute unconsciousness of the body. Pausing in the doorway with head held high and throat and face defined against a scarf of dark sable, she suggested one of those startling studies in black and white that delight the Latin artist. Yet there was a softness of outline very different from the hard splash of the painter's brush. Her black hat shaded cloudy black hair and sent shadows round her wide-set eyes so that one could not make out their color. Her short gown of black velvet caught the light where it clung round her. There was a pulsing, vibrant quality to the swift glance that circled the room. Hers was a face—a figure—that held something more powerful than strength, more magnetic than beauty, more potent than character, that something which through the ages

has swayed dynasties, toppled empires. In a word—feminine mystery.

As she turned back into the anteroom, such eyes as had taken note followed her. But Natalie Gleason was unconscious of them. Restless, with the uncertain little movements of anxiety, she sat down, got up, then started toward the lobby. Halfway she stopped and her breath caught.

"Dan!" she murmured. "Dan!"

The man who strode across the threshold gripped her two hands and stood looking down at her. He said nothing.

"Dan—I—I'm so glad to see you!"

Still he was silent while his gaze held her. Then in a voice so controlled that it was hard:

"You haven't changed," he said.

He dropped her hands, gave his hat and coat to the check girl, and they went into the gently lighted room beyond. When they were seated at a table close against the wall and the breathless quiet of those first moments of meeting had passed, he lifted the flattering amber-tinted shade that covered the lamp placed carefully at one side and peered at her.

"Yes, I was right. You haven't changed."

"Not a bit—in five years?"







"You know, Dan," said Natalie's husband, "I never thought you and I could be friends like this."

## The Woman Who Cheated

"Not a bit."

"I don't see how that's—possible."

"Why? You've been happy, haven't you?"

"Happy?" She looked down swiftly, then up. In her eyes was an odd expression that often came there, a look of longing as if they rested on something she could not reach. "But you have changed, Dan—so much for the better."

"Oh, I'm all right now! No sign of the old trouble."

Her full lips narrowed into a thin thread of bitterness.

"And they told me you'd never get well."

"Who?"

"Oh, mother and father and Jane!"

"And you wanted only the perfect article, no damaged goods, eh? Well—I can't blame you. You're so absolutely perfect—"

"Dan—don't talk like that—please. I—I can't bear it."

He struck a match to his cigarette and over the flame laid his eyes on her, not appraisingly but as if studying a woman he did not know.

"How do you think I bore the news of your marriage, Natalie? Off there in Switzerland putting up a hell of a fight to beat disease, how do you think I felt when I heard the girl I was putting up the fight for had got tired of waiting?"

"I didn't get tired of waiting, Dan."

"No? Then of loving me, eh?"

"No—no! Would I have come to New York the instant I learned you were back? Would I have wired you to meet me if I'd stopped caring—ever?"

"Then I don't—get you."

The black eyes above his high cheek bones were stern and uncompromising as they demanded that she turn back the page of revelation. The broad shoulders were hunched forward. He leaned across the table and she noticed that his dark hair now gray-streaked had thinned round the temples giving his forehead greater height. He looked like a judge. It was as if the frail, valiant Dan Halliday who had gone away had sent back a man of iron to take his place.

"I wanted to wait for you, Dan. I—I vowed that nothing—nothing in the world would take me away from you. I'd known Tony all my life. He'd always wanted to marry me—you knew that. But after I met you, no one else mattered. Tony's caring was insignificant. No one ever counted—but you."

"And yet—you could marry him." He said it without a trace of emotion.

"I don't know how I ever did it, Dan. I don't truly." The fine white hand that stirred her tea, trembled. She looked up like a prisoner at the bar pleading for mercy. "You were gone a year—then two. And they kept telling me you'd never come back. Father and mother with all their ingrown ideas kept insisting that my life would be wasted, that I'd give my youth to a dream of love that could never come true. And Jane who had married Ralph without any mad passion for him and seemed perfectly happy—oh, you don't know what it means, Dan, when a girl's parents and sister, all those who are close to her, day after day in the sweetest way possible keep telling her what a fool, what an utter fool, she is! It's the most insidious influence in the world. You're a man—you can't know how, eventually, it breaks down all her resolutions."

"But you could go into his arms—loving me."

"I—I didn't know what I was doing."

"You were twenty-four."

"I don't mean that. But you'd been gone two years and all that time Tony had been my devoted slave. When I was blue and wanted to talk to some one who'd understand, he came and let me talk to him—about you. When I wanted the theaters or diversion of any kind, he was mine to command. There wasn't another man I could stand. But Tony—he was like part of myself."

"And so—you let him be."

"Dan—you were more than three thousand miles away."

"If you'd been ten thousand, I'd have waited for you."

"But you're a man—you're strong. Women haven't the resistance—"

"Some women have. It wasn't your strength that failed, Natalie. It was the strength of your love."

"No—no! That's not true. If your letters had held out any certainty of getting well! Oh, Dan, if only you'd married me before you went away!"

"That wouldn't have been fair to you. I wanted to give you a square deal."

"And they, with their talk of incurability, of the futility of hoping—with their thrusting of Tony's devotion at

me and insistence that I was sacrificing his happiness—they cheated me."

"You cheated yourself, Natalie."

She looked up swiftly and her lips thinned again.

"No—they were the ones—they and life! And I'm going to make both pay me back."

He leaned across the table and spoke slowly, huskily:

"Life doesn't owe any of us happiness, Natalie. We haven't the right to any happiness we don't earn. And there seems to be just one way to earn it—through suffering."

"I've suffered—heaven knows!"

Instantly his expression changed. Judgment of her softened into anxious tenderness.

"Isn't he—good to you?"

"Too good! There's nothing he can give me that isn't mine—materially or any other way. But that doesn't make for—happiness."

"You're finding that out?"

"I knew it from the very beginning."

In the silence that followed, simultaneously both looked out toward the restaurant, now emptied of guests. Theirs was the last occupied table. Her eyes came back.

"I'm staying in town overnight. Will you take me to dinner?"

For the first time, he smiled.

"It's the same dear old smile, Dan," she breathed.

"Dinner tonight and we lunch together tomorrow," he put in quickly. "When do you go back to Boston?"

"I don't know—exactly. Dan—do you remember how you used to take me for a drive round the park at this hour every time I came to New York? Let's go now. It's just about—twilight."

When her back was turned as he let her lead the way out, his eyes fastened on the graceful, velvet-garbed form as a man, desert-parched, beholds the first glimpse of an oasis. It was a look so hungry, so despairing, that had she met it at that moment, she would have faced a judgment more relentless than his earlier sternness.

But as the man seated himself beside her in the taxi, the quiet penetration she had encountered across the table had apparently not changed.

They drove up Fifth Avenue jammed with the home-going crowd. Lights and faint stars looked through the misty violet of the late March afternoon. The hard outlines of the city had sieved magically through the twilight and filmed into beauty. They turned into the park scented with the presage of spring.

She waited for a break in his silence, then touched his hand urgently.

"Don't, Dan! Don't judge me too harshly."

"I've been trying for the past three years—not to. When I got the news and everything went smash, my first thought was that getting well now wasn't much use. For a time I went under completely. But the habit of living is pretty dominant, I guess. I often wonder how many suicides would step back from the brink—if they could. So, with only the animal will to, I went on looking after this carcass of mine and telling the other part of me that something pretty desperate must have happened to make the girl who had promised herself to me, quit me—cold."

"I didn't quit you, Dan. Why, you've been with me all these three years I've been married—to him. I've closed my eyes when he took me in his arms and told myself it was you." She did not go on. She did not look at him for a moment. Her eyes blurred. Her next words were spoken so hesitant, so low, he scarcely heard them. "He—he's wanted a child, Dan. But I wouldn't have children—" she paused.

"Is that fair—to him?"

"No, I don't suppose so. But I couldn't bear the thought, Dan. Not—not his children—"

"You mean you cared for me—that much?"

She looked up then, let him see the light lifting through her tears.

"So much that when I heard you were coming back—heard you were well, I knew there must be no barriers to keep us apart, knew I had to come to you—"

"Natalie!"

"Dan—tell me! I must know! Do you hate me? Do you still love me?"

"A man loving you once, Natalie, wouldn't quit loving because he'd lost you."

Her eyes clung to his.

"That's all I wanted to know. That's all—all!"

She said it with the exaltation of passion unashamed, of surrender in eyes and parted lips, in every magnetic line of her. Yet

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"Wh  
come to  
"Yes  
"For





"But you could go into his arms  
—loving me?" Dan asked.

he caught only the hands she reached out and held them, staring  
down through the shadows to grip her gaze.

"What do you mean by that, Natalie? Are you offering to  
come to me? Are you?"

"Yes."

"For—always?"

"I have been yours—always."

"You'll divorce Gleason—and marry me? Natalie—answer  
me!"

"Dan—"

"Answer—"

"Dan—dear—how can I explain? How can I make you under-

stand? He's been so good to me—so wonderful—I can't hurt him now. After so many years of devotion, I can't deal him a blow between the eyes. I'd rather die than wreck his life that way. I've no excuse to. He's been everything a husband should be—and more. Don't you see—my hands are tied. I can't divorce him—I can't!"

He let the hands that were tied fall from his. But he did not move his intent gaze.

"I see. You can't divorce him but you can deceive him. Isn't that smashing his life just the same?"

"No!" She did not hesitate, though her eyes dropped. "He'll never know. And you and I belong together—to each other—"

"Can a woman belong to two men?"

"What I give you has never been his. I shan't be robbing him. But I would be if I divorced him—of everything he holds dear. There'd be nothing left for him. Don't you see?"

"I see that I have no right to you—that way."

"You have the right to me—any way. Dan, all those years of loneliness and misery—I want to make them up to you. Haven't you earned a little happiness? Haven't you suffered enough?"

"God knows I have!"

"Can't I give you back something of what you've lost? Doesn't the knowledge that I love you—that in spite of everything no one can take your place—mean anything to you?"

He did not answer. He looked out at the park in its mystic, beckoning mood of approaching night and the bones of his jaw set as if clamped. Virility, strength, desire stifled for years, did battle with the resolve to hold to the standard that obtains in the brotherhood of man to man, the unwritten law of the square deal. And their gauntlets were of steel. An instant of absolute, tingling silence, and then the woman stepped between the combatants. She laid a hand, ungloved, over the ones clenched together and repeated her question.

"Doesn't that mean anything to you?"

He turned, stared down into the eyes whose look of yearning came through the shadows and his own closed as if to shut it out.

"Doesn't it, Dan?"

"Everything."

She gave a low laugh. The very halting tone in which the word was uttered made it sweeter.

"Dan—Dan—what does anything matter then?"

"Natalie—for God's sake—don't! I don't know Tony Gleason, but you're his—his wife, and no matter what I've gone through, he owes me nothing. If he owed me anything, it would be to make you happy and he's doing that—to the best of his ability. If he's failed, it's your fault, not his!"

"It's life's fault for taking me from you. I told you I was going to make life pay us back—and I am." She caught his arm. The tenseness of the slim, clinging hands burned through his ulster. "Dan—there's only one question you and I have to answer—do we care enough to risk everything for each other? Does living mean anything now without each other? Think! If it does to you—I'll go back to Boston tonight and never see you again. I promise. I swear it! But if it doesn't—if you feel as I do—then I'm yours, dear—as long as there's a breath of life—"

She did not finish. Her voice caught on the last words, choked as she tried to say them. Her eyes, lifted to his, were filmed. She did not move—did not sway toward him. Except for that clinging clasp, she did not touch him.

A look of anguish swept across the man's face. He tried to tear his gaze from her. Then with her name scarcely breathed, his arms went up and round her and their lips were together.

## II

It was an old room made over, one of those late Nineteenth Century rooms in a house whose proud, somewhat narrow back had been turned for several generations on the primitive struggles of existence. Its present head was the first in many decades who looked upon love as anything but a necessary adjunct for the propagation of the species.

Perhaps it was this rare gift of human emotion in a family that scorned it which made Anthony Gleason so lovable. But the slight, not very tall man with gentle brown eyes and a ready smile invited confidence at first glance. He was the sort to whom one would turn in trouble—instinctively—with the certainty of secrets kept, of advice and sympathy freely given. He had a way of talking that was almost shy, yet what he said was always well worth hearing. Occasionally his eyes held the anxious look of

the man so eager to please his wife that he's forgotten the trouble of pleasing himself. But tonight as he stood at one side of the high marble fireplace and talked to the man facing him, while his glance strayed every now and then toward the woman at the other side of the flames, his expression held deep admiration and a warm, frank friendliness.

"You know, Dan," he observed, "I never thought you and I could be friends like this. Did you, old man?"

Halliday looked up, but not at him.

"No—didn't seem logical. I'll say that."

"Why, in the old days, even after Natalie and I were married, there were times when the mere mention of your name was as a red rag to a bull. I never let her know that, though," he added with that recurrent glance at his wife, "did I, dear?"

"No," she answered, gaze on the fire. "I'd never have guessed it."

"Fact, though! I can speak of it now as rather a joke because in the year I've known Dan, there isn't a man for whom I have more respect, or genuine admiration."

"Thanks," said Halliday, his voice low. "It's mutual—you know that."

"I can see the force of character—and will—that conquered illness and put you on your feet again. That was the first thing that got me—the indomitable will in you to surmount every obstacle. It brought you through the valley and it's the thing that's made a success of you in your profession after five years away from it. I'm glad Natalie let us meet. It's been my gain and I'm duly grateful."

The other man pulled at his cigar, said nothing. The butler passed between them with his tray of after-dinner coffee cups and Dan Halliday glanced up at him with an expression of gratitude deeper than Gleason's. The latter continued with a frank smile.

"Your coming here as you've been doing makes me feel, in a way, that you know I didn't play you a scurvy trick by plunging in and winning the girl I wanted. And I don't mind telling you," his kind eyes traveled from the man to the woman whose white satin gown flamed with the fire's reflection, "that this friendship between you and Natalie is a great joy to me. It proves that I haven't separated you altogether."

"I'm glad you feel that way," Halliday put in, because the other paused evidently for a reply. "I'm pretty much alone. It's nice having Natalie run down to New York every now and then."

"And both of us want you to look on this place as your second home, don't we, dear?"

"Dan knows how I feel about it," came the answer spoken softly.

"I don't see why we can't persuade you to stop here when you're in Boston," Gleason added.

"Oh," the man he faced managed a smile, "a bachelor is much better off in some hotel where he can tip the maid to collect the togs he leaves scattered round!"

"But it seems nonsense to have you anywhere else when we have this big place all to ourselves. Isn't that so, dear?"

"Of course!"

"Well, perhaps Natalie can persuade you to have a try at it next trip. When will that be?"

"I'm not sure. Now that the plans for the Henshaw Building have been O.K.'d and put through, there's nothing to bring me here. I'm likely to lay off for a time and go abroad."

"Abroad?" It was the woman who spoke, with eyes raised quickly.

"Yes. You see, in the two years I've been back, I haven't had a day's vacation. Kept my nose to the grindstone—and now I'm tired of planning buildings. I want to see some mountains—Swiss preferred, with a chalet or two slipping off the side."

"But, Dan—isn't this a sudden decision?"

"No. I've had it at the back of my brain for a month or more."

"How—how long will you be away?"

"Can't say—exactly."

Gleason broke in.

"It's a great idea, I think. Dan's been overdoing things—working too hard. I hadn't meant to speak of it, but lately he's been looking a bit seedy. A few months of relaxation won't hurt you, old man." He set down his coffee cup and pulled out his watch. "I'll have to be running along. Won't be more than an hour at the outside. If Morrison weren't leaving town tonight, I wouldn't go at all, but you and Dan can manage to amuse yourselves. Why don't you run over to the Tremont? They say there's a good musical comedy on." (Continued on page 128)

*EVERY man—and most women—reaches a point in his life where he wishes he might pull up stakes, forget his past and begin life afresh. This is the story of a man who did.*

## *The Man Who Married His Own Wife*

by  
**JOHN  
FLEMING  
WILSON**  
and  
**MARY  
ASHE  
MILLER**

*Illustrations by*  
Lee Conrey

"Somehow," said Elsie, looking up at him queerly, "somehow it seems as if you were an old friend."

**T**HOMAS MORTON came into the offices of the Blue Star Steamship Line at his usual hour, made the customary salutations to his various subordinates, shut himself inside his own room and rang for his secretary. Miss Blythe responded, as she always did, with a feminine curiosity as to what kind of mood her employer was in. This morning the first quick glance told her that Captain Morton was in a cold temper. Yet there was an expression almost of exultation on his rather homely, clean-shaven face. He addressed her briefly, gave a few instructions for the morning's work, then said, "You know Judge Lawrence?"

Miss Blythe hesitated. It was a name once famous in San Francisco. William Lawrence had been a man with a future; now he was a man with a past. Usage had maintained him in the shadowy respectability of being called Judge, but he was, in reality, a shabby, dim kind of attorney supposed to live from his fees got in the police courts. He lived obscurely, never appeared in public and was avoided by those who one time had known him best. That Thomas Morton of the Blue Star Line should call for him was odd.

"Come, come!" Morton reminded her sharply. "You know the man I mean."

"Yes," Miss Blythe admitted.

"Send for him immediately," Morton ordered. "I want him here within the hour."

Duly Miss Blythe announced Judge Lawrence.

"Show him in right away," her employer said curtly. "And don't allow us to be disturbed."

As a secretary, Miss Blythe obeyed with alacrity; as a woman well acquainted with the ins and outs of San Francisco's social life, one of Elsie Morton's own set, and like everyone else somewhat puzzled by the hasty marriage of Elsie Haynes with Thomas Morton, she felt that a crisis was at hand. For the two years of Thomas's and Elsie's marriage there had always been a slight current of gossip about their domestic affairs.

Thomas was and remained exactly what he had been for five years, the steadily successful, single-minded, vigorous and rather crude unsocial man with a flair for the shipping business. He had never belonged to Elsie's set and since the wedding had seemed unresponsive to its advances. Yet he had undeniably remained in love with his wife on whom he lavished his wealth.

Elsie, on the other hand, had been suspected of resenting Tom's attitude toward her old friends, and Miss Blythe knew that she had several times made it clear that to her husband's importunate demands upon her time she would yield only so far and no farther.

Then there was Freddie Needham.



## The Man Who Married His Own Wife

Freddie was a well bred, sophisticated, useless chap whom Thomas unwisely chose to ignore completely.

"If Elsie does anything to lose Tom Morton and encourage Freddie, she's a fool," thought Miss Blythe and returned to her secretarial duties refreshed. Later she gave a few moments' thought to Judge Lawrence, who had more than once been shadily associated in quiet divorce suits of which the public had learned nothing except the property settlements.

It was a situation with possibilities.

Within Morton's office the two men met with casual civility. Judge Lawrence was quite at ease, unimpressed by a summons even from so great a man as Morton. He seated himself in an uncomfortable chair and folded his long, lean hands over his dingy waistcoat. His elderly and saturnine countenance expressed nothing but polite curiosity.

Morton, on the other hand, after the briefest of greetings, walked to the window and stared down Market Street towards the bay. It was evident that he found it difficult to express what he had in mind to say. When he turned and faced his visitor his usually keen, steady eyes were clouded.

"I suppose nothing stands in the way of your accepting a retainer to act as my personal attorney, Judge?" he asked.

"Nothing," Lawrence returned gravely. "I understand, of course, that your company is amply supplied with counsel."

Morton nodded and sat down. "You are to act for me personally," he said. He drew out a check book and wrote rapidly and firmly.

The judge looked at the bit of paper without a flicker of an eyelash, tucked it into his wallet and said, "I'll give you a receipt for five thousand dollars, if you like."

Morton nodded, put his check book away and stared at the clean, shining, businesslike desk. Then he said in a somewhat hoarse voice, "You are probably aware that I often employ experts to gather data and render opinions?"

"Quite so," was the response.

"I am engaging you as an expert, Judge."

"It would be unbecoming in me to emphasize my own accomplishments," Lawrence murmured.

"The fact remains that you are an expert," Morton returned.

"In what?"

"In failure," was the brief response.

The attorney's thin face flushed slowly. His fingers trembled slightly on his threadbare waistcoat. But otherwise he gave no sign of being disconcerted.

"You wish—you wish to fail?" he inquired coolly.

"I have failed," Morton returned, and his almost boyish face grayed. "Happening to know somewhat of your history, I realize that no one could so completely understand me as yourself. May I be quite blunt? Twenty years ago you were a coming man. You had a really wonderful social position, which meant everything to you. There was nothing you wouldn't finally have achieved if you hadn't—if there hadn't been—"

Lawrence looked up and the gaze of his eyes was almost startling in its intensity.

"You have given Mrs. Morton everything you could wring from an unwilling and resentful business world," he remarked, apparently without reference to Morton's reminder of his own past. "I knew Elsie Morton's father very well—the Hayneses never had money, but they were received everywhere. I knew Elsie as a child."

The other squared his shoulders and his rugged face became austere. "I need say little more, Judge. The past two years and a half I've done ten years' work to make the Blue Star Line the biggest on the Pacific. I did it for my wife's sake. I've torn a dozen men from their high places because they stood between me and what I wanted. I've piled up a fortune."

"But you've not been able to battle with the Freddie Needhams," Lawrence said quietly. "You've spent your time and expected Elsie to spend her time thinking about ships, and trade and commerce, instead of dropping your work to play about with her."

"And where would the Blue Star Line have been if I had not done what I have?" Morton demanded angrily.

"Then," the judge went on imperturbably, "you've never consented to let us—to let your wife's set know just who you are."

"The question wasn't asked," was the harsh response.

Lawrence glanced at the man before him, sturdily and lithely built, with the carriage of one used to command, marred by a slightly flattened nose and a scarred jaw. Thomas Morton was a figure.

"Elsie is very fond of the Freddie Needhams," Lawrence went on, "the amusing, mildly venturesome chaps who entertain

her and play about with her while you work. But, I'll admit, you've failed."

"I bore her," Morton acknowledged with a sigh.

"She thinks your wealth entitles you both to have more fun," the judge said. "She thinks you ought to try at least to learn to do the things she likes, which the men she likes do so well."

Morton laughed savagely.

"Oh, we've had it out! She doesn't think me worth while as I am. At first I was something new in her life. It never entered her head I didn't belong—me the fellow who came from New York to take charge here. And I loved her, Judge. Today I love her more than anything else in this world. I've made her a kind of queen in her own right. I've made her a fortune to spend or save as she likes. Yet when I go and ask her to stop away from some party just to talk with me—she lets me know she hates my crooked face and my scarred jaw and my uncouth ways." Morton let one strong hand lie a moment on the great seam that lined his face. "The man who did that died," he murmured. "He died—but he has his revenge. I'm a failure."

Judge Lawrence gave assent soberly. He placed the pointed tips of his fingers together and appeared to study the problem. When he spoke it was in a subdued voice:

"As an expert in failure I admit your position. Such failures are irremediable and conclusive. But you have in you the spirit of adventure. You are, if you will pardon the personal allusion, a man who, finding himself balked in an ambition, suddenly gives up everything connected with it and goes away. You are going away now. That is why you have sent for me, because this morning you left your home resolved never again to be the plaything of a woman, as you put it. You are going to start afresh."

Morton nodded absently.

The judge fixed him with a sharp glance. "But I have this one thing to tell you. You can go away, you can turn all this money over to Elsie, you can vanish, you can put a world between you—and each night in the dark you will suffer the torments of the damned; of the damned who love a woman and cannot have her. Love is a thing nobody can run from or avoid or ignore. Are you brave enough to do this?"

Morton stared bitterly at the desk.

"That will be your daily and nightly punishment—never to be able to forget her, to put her out of your mind."

"You stayed—and what good did it do you?" Morton demanded suddenly.

The judge's pallid face grew faintly flushed. But he made no response.

"What good did it do you?" came the repeated and savage demand.

"One clings to a faint hope," Lawrence muttered.

Morton went to the window and looked out again. "You and I understand each other perfectly. But there are certain things no man like me can forgive." He turned on the judge fiercely: "Yet this afternoon, if I would go and surrender, if I would give in and abolish my own personality, my own deep sense of self-respect—she would come back to me. It is impossible. I am going away."

Judge Lawrence bent his gray head. "I wonder! Women have a tremendous sense of the importance of the past. I—do not think me too sentimental—have cherished for years the thought that on certain occasions, under circumstances, I have risen up into the memory of a woman and maintained my supremacy in her splendid and delicate consciousness for a time. Now you are going away. All this work on which you pride yourself was done with but one hope in mind—that Elsie would understand, would let her world go by while she showed you that she knew you and your thoughts. You have failed. Her thoughts are on other men, on pleasanter and more amusing men, who in reality mean nothing to her. But you quit. You throw the Blue Star Line away in a gesture of complete resignation. And you will live accursed among all men, because you will live haunted by the thought that possibly you were wrong, that maybe you could have retained your wife's love. However—go. Now for the details."

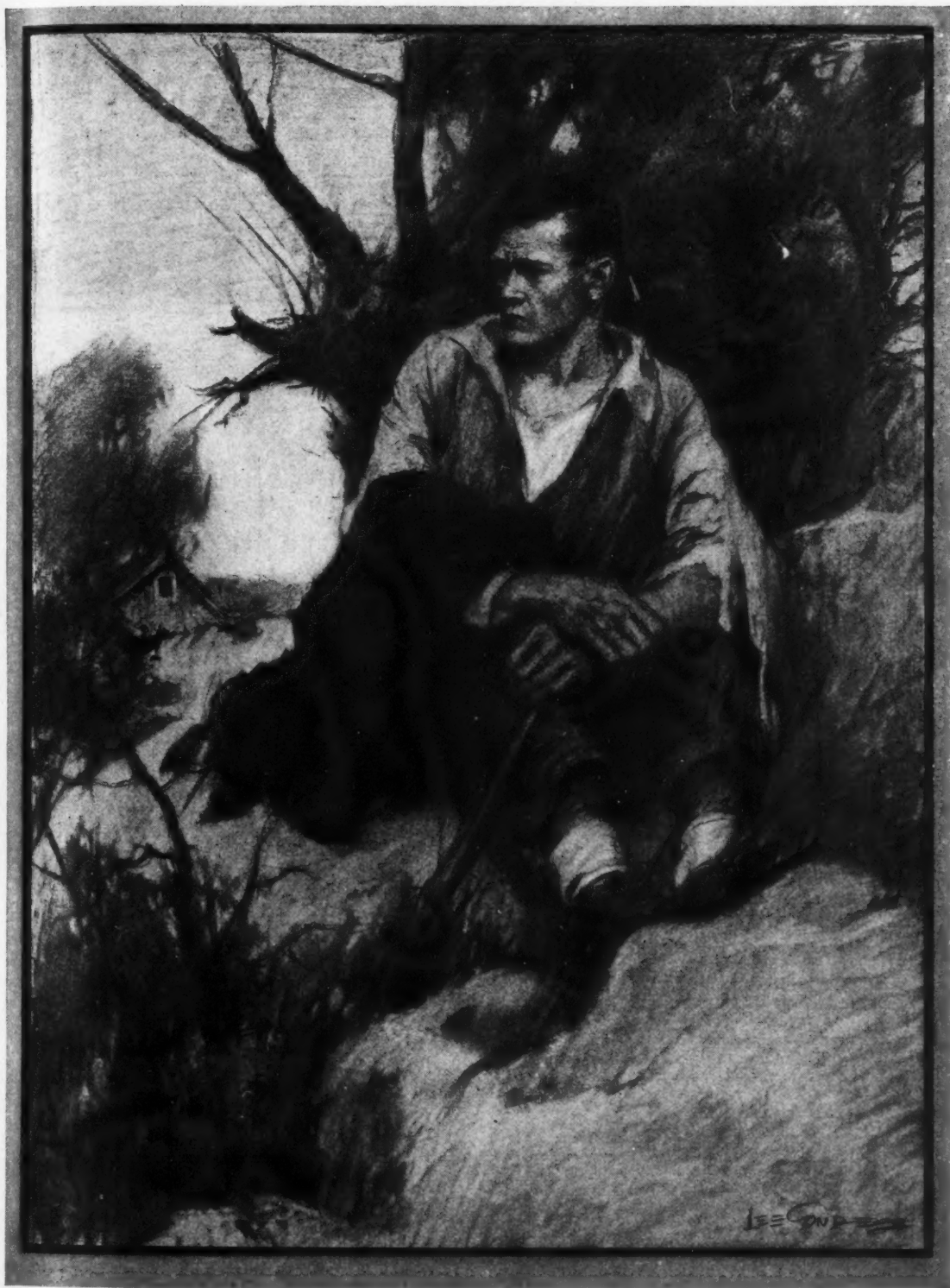
For half an hour Morton outlined his plan.

"All I want is one hundred thousand cash," he stipulated. "I will see to that myself."

Lawrence nodded and rose.

"I had better see Mrs. Morton?" he inquired.

Morton shook his head. "I don't want her bothered. She has been bothered enough. I am anxious that she simply find herself mistress of all this property without having to consider me, or being compelled to argue with herself what her wifely duty may be."



Morton knew at last that he had found the way out. The only thing now was to buy different clothes.

"And you will not see her again?"

Morton's face flushed. He seemed about to reply, thought better of it and shook his head.

Yet at nine that night he was in Elsie's room. While he was unaware of it, he was a forbidding figure. His face was set in stern lines, his lips grimly compressed.

"I'm trying for the last time to be frank with you," he said.

Elsie put her arms up in a lazy gesture of boredom. He saw the pink of her flesh showing through her negligee. She smiled provokingly.

"After all," Morton went on trying to make himself clear,

"we are partners, aren't we? And I can't stand it, seeing you waste your time, waste the time I want of you, with other men who are nothing."

"They have manners and amuse me," she replied. Then she glanced at him with an inscrutable and searching glance.

"Who are you, anyway?" she demanded. "Somebody was asking."

He laughed in despair. "I don't know whether I'm Elsie Morton's husband or her slave," he replied. "It's the question I'm trying to find an answer to."

He did not realize the pent-up anger, wrath and sense of

humiliation that lay concealed behind her smile. He did not know that he had bitterly hurt her. Instead his own feeling of injury overpowered everything else. He stared at her and she stared back, until the strain was too much. She waved him away with a cry at once furious and imperative. He departed.

At noon the next day Thomas Morton quietly closed his desk and left the office. No one suspected, as he departed, that he was never to be seen there again. Judge Lawrence had done his task with ability and skill. But in the hallway Miss Blythe waited for him, her pretty face expressionless and calm.

She held out her hand and he took it, puzzled and disturbed.

"Good by," she murmured, with a sudden friendly smile.

Then she, too, was gone. Morton stood stock-still for an instant, feeling that amiable, warm clasp. Then he strode on to the elevator and was carried to the street.

In a bank where he was not known he deposited fifty thousand dollars to the credit of O'Hara Marsden; another fifty thousand in bonds he put in safe deposit. With less than five hundred in his pocket he walked into the street and towards Telegraph Hill. That afternoon he fought his last battle with himself.

"I am young still," he told himself. "I'm badly hurt, but I'll survive." So he put down a wild desire to go and fall at Elsie's feet, to plead with her, to kneel with his head on her knees and tell her what was in his heart.

That evening he called on Judge Lawrence. They shook hands solemnly.

"One thing, Judge," Morton remarked. "Should anything happen that might indicate that I had—that something had happened to me, please use every endeavor to prove it a fact."

Lawrence nodded his elderly head.

"I have no intention of making way with myself," Morton went on. "But an accident might occur—even a rumor might establish the certainty that I was dead. See to it that every available pretext is taken to assure Elsie her freedom in her own mind."

That night he spent in a small hotel in the Italian quarter, tossing without sleep on a hard bed till dawn. Then he left this asylum and went to the beach. He walked all day long, flushed and feverish, till he came to a lonely cove between cliffs that rose to the rounded headlands above. There he sat down. From some impulse he could not have explained he found himself longing for a swim, so he undressed and went into the surf.

A moment later he discovered his way out, the solution of all his immediate difficulties. He made his way back to the beach gingerly dragging something behind him. This he hauled up on the beach, and knelt and examined it. Water and time had altered the dead man's once well-marked features into a kind of blurred expression of the weariness of death. A hasty look through his clothes produced a seaman's book, a few papers, a letter or so and some money.

He left the cove at midnight in the hastily dried, wrinkled and cheap garments of Robert Forsdale, an unknown seaman whose body was even floating a mile offshore, rising and falling to the steady flow of the sea.



"The change in you is complete," the lawyer admitted. "No one on earth would recognize you for the man you once were."

A walk of twenty miles brought Morton to a small and in-curious town where he purchased new clothes throughout. It struck him as humorous that he paid for them out of the fund supplied by the man with whom he had exchanged identities.

A fortnight later, at an old house in the East Fifties in New York, Thomas Morton went up the steps with a step assured and brisk. An old butler received his card and ushered him into a warm and well lighted room where an elderly gentleman sat reading from a book.

"Well, O'Hara," said this person petulantly, "you are back after sixteen years."

Morton seated himself and grinned. "So I am, Grandfather. And I came because I knew you would understand. You always did."

"I may have understood," said the old man, laying his book down reluctantly, "but I disapproved."

"I had to go on my own," Morton said quietly. "The family was too much for me."

"You took another name, sir."

"I added your Thomas to my mother's Morton. I made good, sir."

The butler entered with a tray on which was an evening paper. "Mr. Marsden," said the servant, "I shall bring the other papers presently."



Thomas Morton leaned back luxuriously. But his grandfather brought him up with a sharp: "Do you happen to know that Thomas Morton's body has been found, identified and buried in San Francisco? Do you know that you are dead?"

The papers confirmed the assertion and for the moment Morton stared solemnly into the fire. Then he leaned over and touched the old man's pointed knee.

The old man nodded with satisfaction.

O'Hara Marsden sat late that night in a hotel room and read the account in the papers of the finding of the body of Thomas Morton, of the transfer of his interests to his wife, Elsie Haynes Morton. The old life was definitely finished.

In a couple of days his grandfather had quietly started him in business again, and he went back under the grim old man's yoke with a certain satisfaction in its harshness. His leisure hours were filled with bitterest agony, longing and despair. He thought of Freddie Needham, of all the Freddie Needhams who amount to so little themselves but prove so great an element in the lives and concerns of stronger men and women.

The result of his own violent resentment was a sudden determination to make himself over. He took his problem to his grandfather.

"Right enough," said that old man, peering at him with age-seared eyes. "Plastic surgery will fix nose and scar. You can pick up the other things under trainers. New York is filled with people who will teach you to talk as though you had never trod a quarterdeck, walk as though you had been used all your life to luxurious apartments, chatter as well-bred people are supposed to chatter."

Three months afterwards old Mr. Marsden examined his grandson carefully. He saw a man in the prime of youthful life, handsome, smooth-cheeked, low-voiced, sure-footed, trained to a hair for the life of society.

"You will do," he said finally. "But you must first spend the rest of the year with me. Then I'll let you go back."

And exactly fourteen months after he had left San Francisco, O'Hara Marsden went back to be received as an utter stranger at a hotel where Captain Thomas Morton had been extremely well known. He observed with some amusement that he now commanded a respect from the ser-

vants never accorded him in the old days.

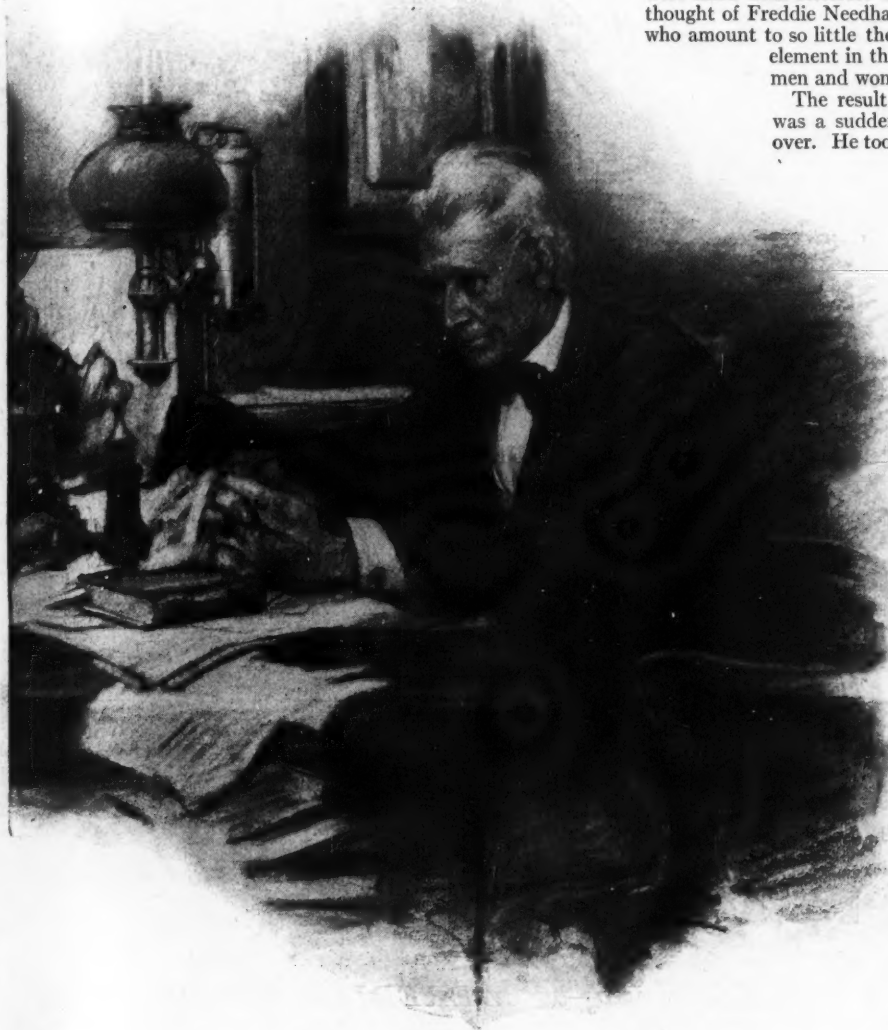
When he had installed himself in his suite he sat down to think out his problem. He had achieved the complete and permanent obliteration of his old personality. He had educated himself so that he knew, with the sagacity of the man who has found himself, that he was provocative and attractive. Elsie had made Freddie Needham her general manager, and Needham, Marsden was certain, had doubly failed—not only in winning Elsie's affection but in managing her affairs.

O'Hara Marsden, on the other hand, came with the prestige of the great New York family behind him. In a business way his grandfather had placed him soundly and completely. Socially, he was of the elect, bearing letters such as open the doors of the most exclusive homes. And he still was youthful, energetic and debonair.

"It was worth the price," he told himself that night. "If only Elsie—"

But when the last reporter had gone he knew that he had come back with a single hope in his heart—to win back the wife he had lost. To be able to dispossess Needham, to be entertained by the best, to live highly and delicately was nothing compared to the simple, profound and almost deadly longing he had for Elsie.

That night he did not sleep. But (Continued on page 116)



"Can I have the old name back, sir?"

"That depends," Mr. Marsden responded unamiably. "I will listen."

For an hour he who had been Thomas Morton recited his adventures. His grandfather sat very still and motionless, as extremely old people do, once in a while putting a hand to his ear. When his grandson had concluded Mr. Marsden rang the bell for the butler.

"Some of the old brandy, Hoskins," he ordered. He turned to Morton and went on in the same dry voice, "You are from tonight O'Hara Marsden again."

The liqueur came and was duly sipped. The old man set down his glass and laughed in a cackling tone.

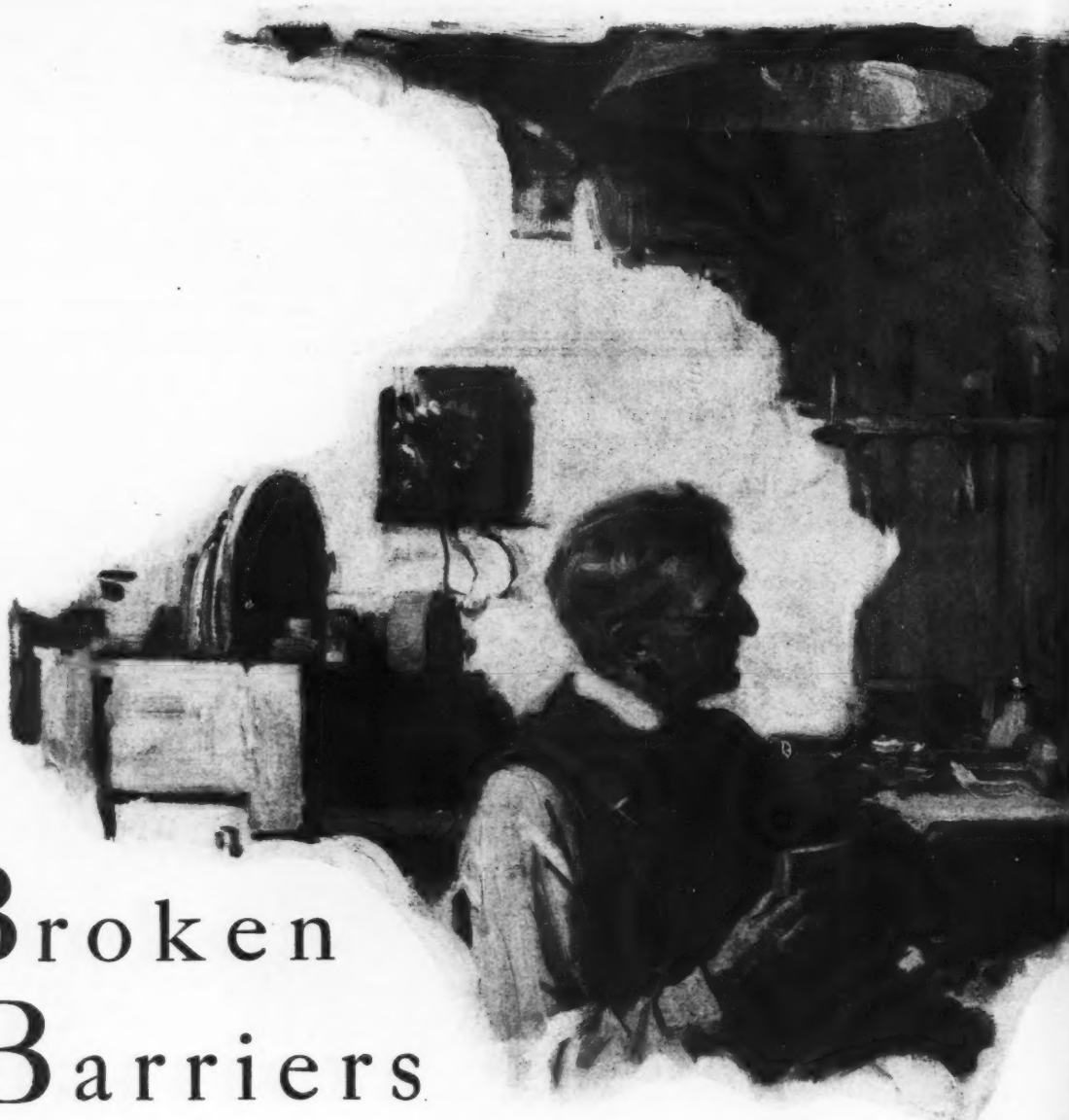
"Your father was just that kind. But you are a better man. I heard of you and your Blue Star Line. Also I heard of your wife." He glanced shrewdly at his grandson. "What about her, O'Hara?"

"I've told the truth," was the confession. "She's fine and splendid and all a woman should be. But she was bored. I was a nobody to her."

"And now?" insisted Mr. Marsden.

O'Hara rose and stretched his powerful arms to their full extent, throwing a gigantic shadow across the room.

"Give me a year, Grandfather."



# Broken Barriers

*A Novel About a Girl You Know—by MEREDITH NICHOLSON*

*Illustrations by Pruett Carter*

## *The story begins:*

**T**HOUSANDS of American girls—from one side of the country to the other—are being confronted today by Grace Durland's problem. When Grace is twenty-one, at a time when her whole normal future seems laid down smoothly before her, she is suddenly forced by reverses in her father's business to leave college and return to her home in Indianapolis. Grace is a wholesome, self-reliant girl, and she looks forward with enthusiasm to the adventure of earning her own living. She is naturally disappointed at having to leave college, but her brother Roy must finish his law course, and she makes the sacrifice gladly.

Mrs. Durland, Grace's mother, urges the girl to get a "respectable" position in some office, but Grace, against her mother's wishes, goes to her friend Irene Kirby and through her influence secures a position in Shipley's department store, where Irene is assistant manager of a department. Mrs. Durland feels that Grace has lowered herself socially, and so does Ethel, Grace's sister.

Ethel is a prim, narrow-minded girl of twenty-four, exceedingly critical of everything modern. Stephen Durland, Grace's father, who is a reticent, unaggressive inventor—recently squeezed out

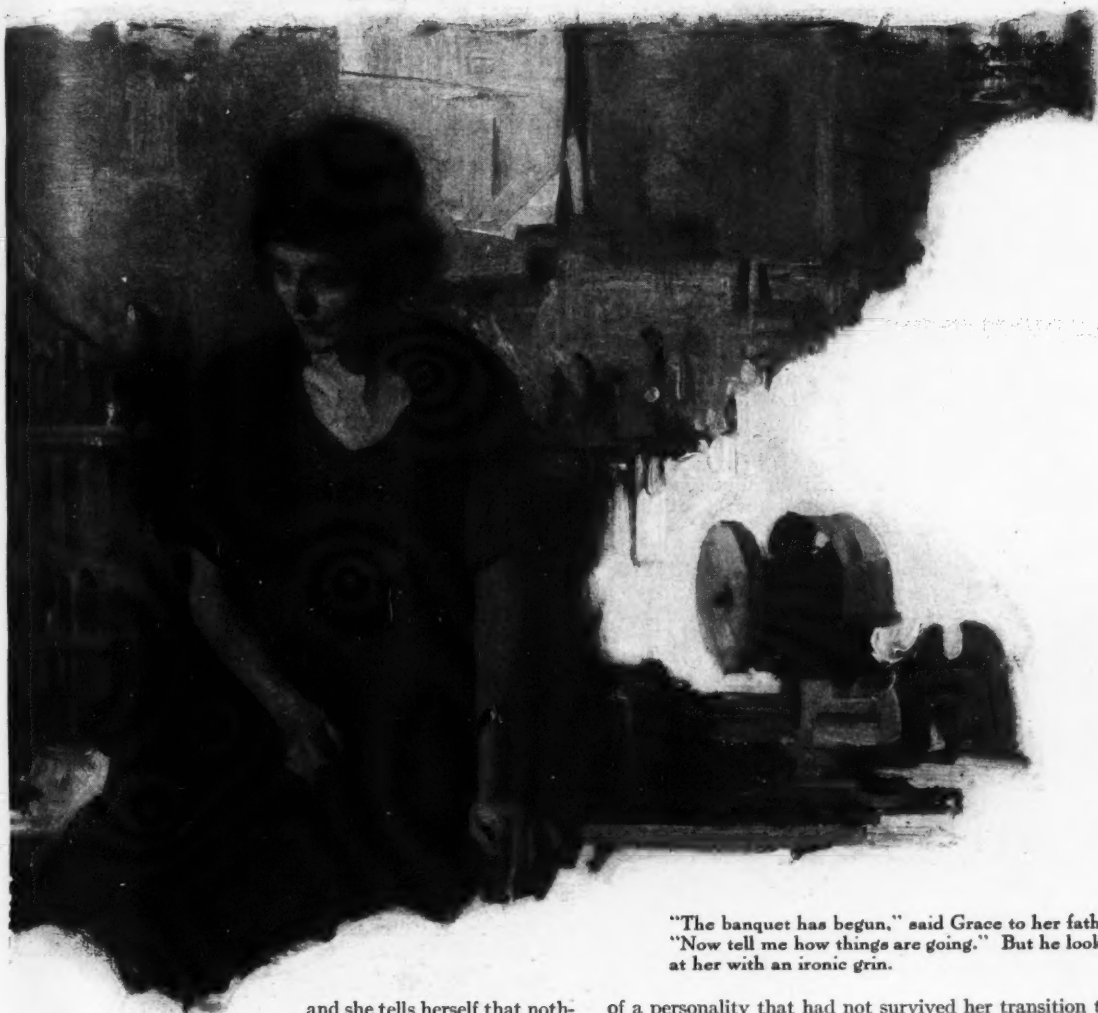
of the company which bore his name—is inclined to let Grace make her own decisions.

In the course of her first day's work at the store, Grace makes a large sale to Beulah Reynolds, a rich spinster of social distinction; and Mrs. Durland and Ethel feel that Grace has now become a social outcast.

Irene Kirby is both clever and worldly-wise, and believes in taking advantage of life as life presents itself. She induces Grace one evening to accompany her on "a party" with two men. One of them proves to be Thomas Kemp, a married man with two grown children, whose relations with Irene seem to be of a rather intimate character. The other man, Ward Trenton, is a successful mining engineer, who by his breeding and impersonal attitude attracts Grace immensely. She finds that he too is married, but practically separated from his wife, a woman of independent mind and wealthy in her own right.

Trenton's attitude toward Grace, however, is above criticism; they talk in friendly fashion about many things, and when the party breaks up Trenton tells Grace that next time he is in Indianapolis he hopes she will let him see her.

As Grace thinks it all over the next day she finds herself disgusted with Irene, whose relations with Kemp are fairly obvious,



"The banquet has begun," said Grace to her father.  
"Now tell me how things are going." But he looked  
at her with an ironic grin.

and she tells herself that nothing could ever make her adopt Irene's philosophy.

Then Grace accidentally meets her childhood friend and companion, Bob Cummings, the son of her father's former partner. Bob is delighted to see the girl, and expresses a sincere regret for the unfortunate break between their two fathers. Neither Grace nor Bob can know that they are soon to meet at the home of Miss Reynolds, where Grace has been invited to dine.

Bob, who is a neighbor of the elderly spinster, drops in that evening in friendly fashion. Grace has always been interested in Bob's music, and as he plays for her now they are swept away by memories of their youthful days together.

While driving Grace home in his car, Bob confides in her that he and his wife are out of sympathy, and that no one has ever understood him as Grace did. He urges her to see him again, but she instinctively discourages this attempt on his part to resume the old footing.

In the meantime Grace has received a letter from Trenton in which he tells her that he has been thinking of her constantly, and that he is counting on seeing her when he returns to Indianapolis. Grace cannot entirely understand the thrill this news gives her.

Trenton returns and takes Grace to dinner and to the theater. Their conversation throughout the evening is impersonal, and quite different from the talk of their first meeting—yet Grace knows she is more than interested in this man, and hopes in her heart that he is more than interested in her. She consents to see him again.

### *The story goes on:*

GRACE'S second evening with Trenton was very like the first except that after dinner at the Sycamore they attended a concert given by a world-famous violinist. Again as under the spell of Bob Cummings's playing at Miss Reynolds's, Grace was caught away into a wonder world, where she wandered like a disembodied spirit seeking some vestige

of a personality that had not survived her transition to another realm.

She was assailed by new and fleeting emotions, in which she studied Trenton and tried to define her attitude toward him, conscious that the time was close at hand when some definition would be necessary. Now and then she caught a glimpse of his rapt look and saw the lines about his mouth tighten. Once he clasped his hands as though, in response to some inner prompting, he was attempting by a physical act to arrest some disturbing flow of his thoughts.

There was a fineness in his face that she had not before fully appreciated, and it was his fineness and nobility, Grace assured herself, that appealed to her. Then there were moments when she was undecided whether she loved or hated him, not knowing that this is a curious phase which women of highly sensitive natures often experience at the first consciousness of a man's power over them. She saw man as the hunter and woman as his prey. Then with a quick revulsion she freed herself of the thought and drifted happily with the tide of harmony.

When they left the theater Trenton asked whether she felt like walking. The night was clear and the air keen and stimulating.

"Of course! That music would carry me a thousand miles," she answered.

As soon as they were free of the crowd he began to talk of music and its power to dissociate the hearer from material things.

"I never felt it so much before," he said. "There's not much poetry in me. I'm not much affected by things that I can't reduce to a formula, and I'm a little suspicious of anything that lifts me off the earth. If I exposed myself to music very often it would ruin me for business."

"Oh, never that! I feel music tremendously; everybody must! It wakes up all manner of hopes and ambitions even if they don't live very long. That violin really made me want to climb!"

"I can understand that. For a few minutes I was conscious



myself of reaching up the ladder for a higher round. It's dangerous to feel so keenly. I wonder if there ever comes a time when we become inculpable of a desire to reach the stars; when the spirit goes dead, and for the rest of our days we just run along in a rut with no hope of ever pulling out? I have a dread of that. It's horrible to think of. Marking time! Going through the motions of being alive when you're really dead!"

"Oh, don't even think of it! You could never be like that!"

"Maybe I'm like that now!"

"You're clear off the key!" she cried. "Of course you're not at the end of things. It's wicked to talk that way."

"Do you really think that? Do you see any hope ahead for me?"

"You know you see it yourself! We wouldn't any of us go on living if we didn't see some hope ahead." Then with greater animation she added:

"You're not a man to sit down at the roadside and burst into tears because things don't go to suit you. I don't believe you're that kind at all. If you are, I'm disappointed."

"Now you've got me with my back to the wall! No man ever wants a woman to think him a coward. I'll keep away from all music hereafter except the snappiest jazz. But give music the benefit of the doubt; it may not have been the fiddle at all!"

"More likely you ate too much dinner."

"Impossible! The ostrich has nothing on me when it comes to digestion. Maybe you're the cause of my depression. Consider that a moment!"

"Oh, that's terribly unkind! If I depress you this must be our last meeting."

"You know I didn't mean that; it's because——"

"Don't begin because! You know you're in a tight corner; you hint that I've given you a bad evening just by sitting beside you at a concert—and a very beautiful concert at that."

"The mistake is mine! You haven't the slightest respect for my feelings. I show you the wounds in my very soul and you laugh at them."

"I certainly am not going to weep my eyes out merely because you let a few bars of music throw you. I had a fit of the blues too; several times I thought I was going to cry. How embarrassed you'd have been!"

"No, I should have held your hand until you regained your composure!"

"Then we'd both have been led out by the ushers!"

He joined with her in playing whimsically upon all the possibilities of their ejection. She thought perhaps he meant to maintain the talk on an impersonal plane but in a moment he said:

"I'm going away tomorrow; first home to Pittsburg for about a week; then to New York. I may not get back here for two or three weeks. I'm mixed up in some things that I can't neglect. I'd like to think you'll miss me!"

"Oh, I always miss my friends when they go away!" she answered and knew it for a silly answer, the reply of a simpering schoolgirl to a boy lover.

Under a street lamp she saw in his face again the grave troubled look that she had observed at intervals during the concert. It was foolish to question now that his interest in her was something more than a passing fancy. Her thoughts flew to the other woman, the wife of whom he had spoken at The Shack only to apologize for it in his letter from St. Louis. He was thinking of her of course; it was impossible for him to ignore the fact that he had a wife.

And again, as so many times before, she speculated as to whether he might not still love this woman and be seeking diversion elsewhere out of sheer loneliness. But as they passed into the shadows again, her hand resting lightly on his arm, she experienced suddenly a strong desire to be kind to him. She was profoundly moved by the thought that it was in her power to pour out to him in great measure the affection and comradeship that he had confessed he hungered for.

They had crossed the canal bridge and were nearing the Durand house. Trenton was accommodating himself perforce to her rapid pace. The tonic air kept her pulses throbbing. She was sure that she loved this man; that the difference in their years was as nothing weighed against his need for her. Tonight, she knew, marked a crisis in their relationship. If she parted from him without making it clear that she wished never to see him again she would be putting herself wholly at the mercy of a fate that might bear her up or down. With only a block more to traverse she battled with herself, summoned all her courage to resist him, only to find that her will was impotent.

Deep in her heart she did not want to send him away with no

hope of seeing him again. He was her one link with the great world beyond the city in which, without his visits to look forward to, she was doomed to lead a colorless, monotonous existence. She was moved by a compassion for him, poignantly tender, that swept away all sense of reality and transcended the bounds of time and space. The very thought of losing him, of not knowing where he would be in the endless tomorrows, only that she would never see him again, was like a pain in her heart. The need in him spoke to the need in her for companionship, for mental stimulus, for affection.

They seemed vastly isolated in the quiet street, as though the world had gone away and left them to settle their affairs with only the stars for witnesses. It had been easy to parry Bob Cummings's attempts to assume a lover-like attitude toward her. But with Trenton this would be impossible. With him it would be necessary to state in the plainest terms that their acquaintance must end if, indeed, she determined to end it.

Nothing had been said since his last remark and her banal reply, and if she meant to thrust him away from her she must act quickly. In a fashion of his own he was frank and forthright. She found it difficult to anticipate him and prepare her replies. There was no leer in him and he did not take refuge in timid gallantries. He addressed her as a man who felt that he had a right to a hearing. And this, in her confused, bewildered senses, gave dignity to the situation. He loved her and she loved him—she was sure that she loved him—and her heart was in wild tumult. She was afraid to speak lest the merest commonplace might betray her eagerness to confess her love for him.

He stepped in front of her and clasped her hand.

"I've got to say it; I must say it now," he said in grave even tones. "No woman ever meant to me what you mean. The first night I met you I knew it had come—the thing I had hoped for—and sometimes had dreaded—a woman I could know as I've never known any woman, not my wife or any other. After I left you I couldn't get you out of my mind." He paused for an instant, then went on hurriedly with undisguised intensification of feeling. "You may think me mad when I've seen you so little; and I know I have no right to love you at all. But I do love you! I want you to belong to me!"

A gust of wind caught up a mass of leaves from the gutter and flung them about their feet as though to remind them of the mutability of all things. He had said that he loved her; almost savagely he had demanded that she give herself to him. It was incredible that he cared so much, that his desire for her could be so great.

He freed her hands as though in sign that he wanted her to speak without compulsion. He waited quietly, his shoulders thrown a little forward, and in the dim starlight she saw his eyes, bright and eager, searching her own.

"You know I care," she said softly.

The words fell from her lips inevitably; no other reply was possible, and it seemed that a great weight had lifted from her heart and that in entrusting herself to him she had found security and peace. She questioned nothing, feeling his arms about her, his kiss warm on her lips. All her doubts were lost in the joy of the moment in which he had confessed his love for her. It was a strange place for the pledging of love and the moment was not to be prolonged.

"We must go on, dear," she said, laying her cheek against his for an instant. The touch of her face caused him to clasp her again.

"Oh, my dearest one!" he cried hoarsely.

As they went on, loitering to delay the moment of parting, they caught hands like children.

"I don't see how you can love me," she said with the anxiety of new love for confirmations and assurances. "I don't belong to your world."

"There's the strangest thing of all!" he exclaimed. "We are born into a new world that is all ours. We have inherited all the kingdoms tonight."

"And the stars up there—do they shine just for us?" she asked, bringing herself closer to him. "And can we keep everyone else out of our world? I want it all to be our very own. Oh, it's so sweet, so wonderful!"

She took a step in advance of him and, lifting her arms, invoked the blessing of the stars upon her happiness.

"It's a miracle beyond any words," he said, "to know that you care. It's easy for me to love you; I loved you in that very first hour we spent together. We don't account for things like that, that come so suddenly and without warning; we merely accept them. I've fought this; I want you to know that I've fought it."

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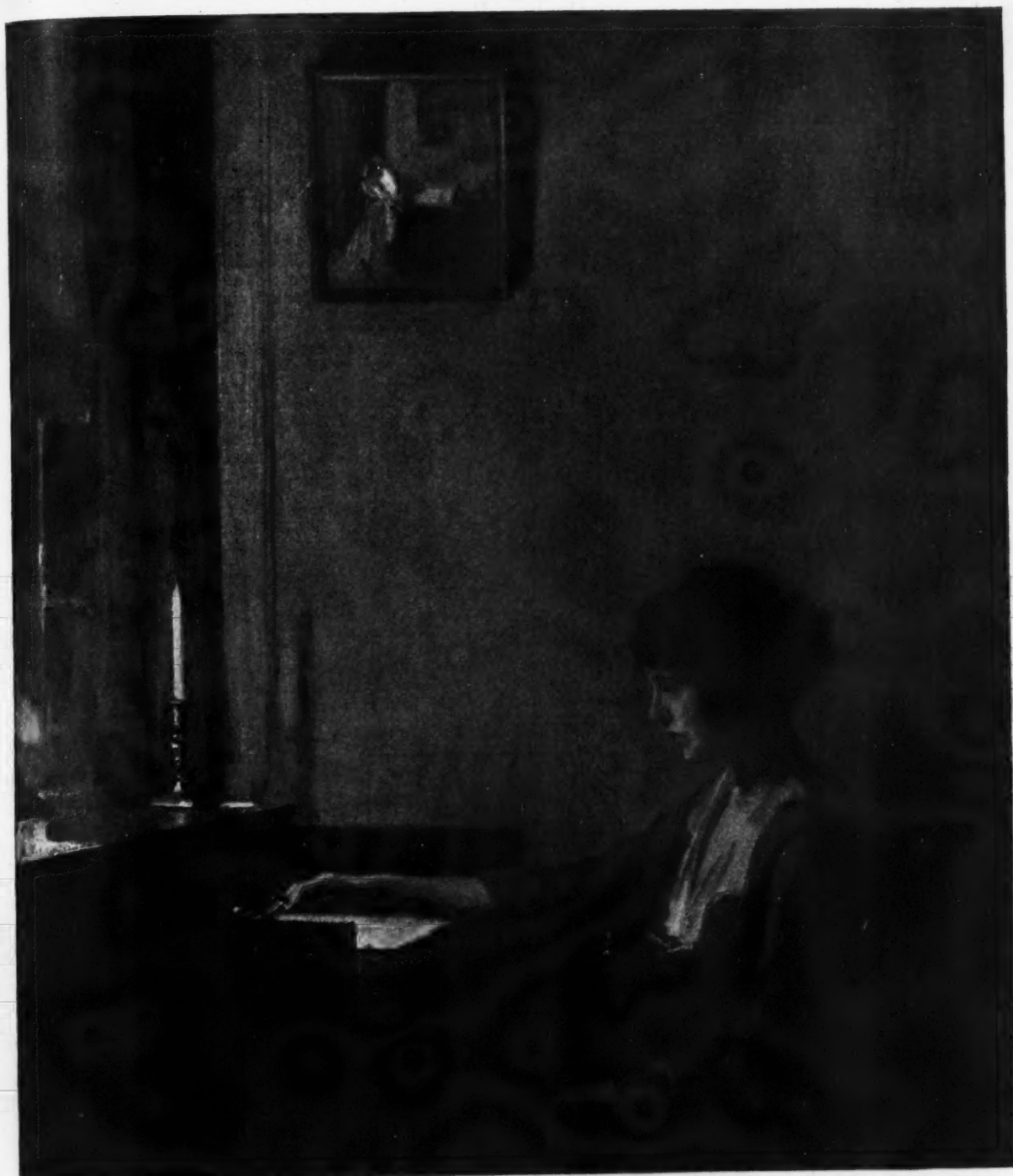
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It was a tremendous thing, this realization of love, and Grace sat down humbly to try to put it into words.

"Oh, so have I! But—why did you fight it?"

Her voice betrayed her confused emotions. Her sense of right was as nothing against the belief that he loved her and that she loved him. A masterful tide had caught them up and borne them far, leaving them islanded on territory remote and touched with a mystical light, that souls had never known before.

After all her doubts it had been so easy to yield. She was now fully persuaded that henceforth her life was to be bound up with his; that until death took one or the other they would never face separation. Space and distance were as nothing; if he went to far and waste places there would be still the strong spiritual tie which it pleased her to think was the real bond—something which, in her absolute surrender, she felt to be above all laws of men and of kinship with heavenly things.

It struck her as odd that she was able to analyze so thoroughly

her sensations, finding explanation and justification cleansed of all passion.

She wished they were alone that she might hold him close in her arms and tell him over and over again of the depth of her love and make him understand all that she wanted to be to him.

"I know I have no right to your love; none whatever," he said steadily. "There are people who would call me a scoundrel for saying what I have just said to you. But every man in my plight feels that his case is different. I've thought of all this in the plainest terms, not sparing myself."

"It would be like you to do that."

Now that she had taken him for her lover she saw him as a paragon of generosity and nobility. He would not spare himself; she was anxious to apply balm to his conscience, to make him understand that her happiness was so complete that nothing mattered.

"Just so you love me!" she said gently. "Nothing could be so dear as just knowing that you care. Oh, do I mean so much to you?"

"Everything!" he exclaimed and lifted her hand and kissed it. "That's the way it has to be; everything or nothing. I never loved anyone before."

"I'm so glad!" he cried fervidly. "I was afraid to ask you that. I had even thought there might be some one else—some younger man—"

"Stop! We're not going to talk of ages," she laughed, with a quick gesture laying her hand for a moment against his lips. "It must be understood right now that you're not a day over twenty-five."

"You're going to spoil me! And you don't know how much I want to be spoiled."

"You poor dear! I'm going to love petting and spoiling you!"

Instantly it occurred to her that the other woman, the unknown wife of her frequent conjecture, had neither petted nor spoiled him and that this accounted for his eagerness for a new experience. A cloud crossed the bright heaven of her happiness. His wife was not to be relegated to oblivion merely because he had found another object for his affections.

The wife had a very real existence in Grace's imagination. To Trenton's lightly limned sketch the girl had added a line here and there until she fancied she possessed a very true portrait of Mrs. Trenton. Somewhere there existed a Mrs. Ward Trenton, who wrote books and lectured and otherwise advertised herself as a vital being.

"Dear little girl!" said Trenton tenderly. "You are all the world to me. Do you understand?"

"I must believe that," she said.

"There's nothing I can offer you now—neither a home nor the protection of my name. It's got to be just love that's our tie. I'm not going to deceive you about that."

"Yes, I understand what it means," she answered.

"You must believe that I'll do the best I can to make you happy. Love that doesn't bring happiness is an empty and worthless thing. You don't know how much I count on you. I'm laying a burden on you; I'm clutching at you for all the things I've missed out of my life."

"Yes; I know, dear."

"There's something not fair about it—about casting myself upon you as I'm doing," he said doggedly.

"I'm proud that you want me! I want to fill your heart and your life."

"You can; you do even now. But first of all I want you to be sure—sure of yourself. There must be no regrets afterward. I can't see you again before I go, but I'll write."

"I shall miss you so! You will write to me!" she cried, feeling already the loneliness of the days before he came back. His calmness was disconcerting, but she readily forgave this as she would have forgiven him anything. He was thinking of the long future, no doubt, planning ways of seeing her.

"Promise me you'll consider everything."

"It's enough that we love each other!" she replied softly.

"You're not a child but a woman able to see it all in every light. You must be very sure that you care; that you do love me."

"I'm very sure, dear," she said, not a little disturbed by his solicitude, fearing that he himself might now be a prey to apprehensions.

"You can write to me at the addresses I'll send. And then wire me when you're quite sure—not till then!"

"Yes; I'll do as you say. But tell me again that you love me! I shall be so lonely without you!"

"With all my heart I love you. I wish we need never part again. Some day that will be. Some day I can have you with me always! But now—"

The sentence died on his lips. What could be now he did not say, shrank from saying perhaps. She felt a sudden strong impulse to speak of his wife; to ask him whether he did not still care for her. But it was in her heart, the battleground of so many confused emotions, to give him the benefit of every doubt. Her forces of defense had mutinied and left her powerless even to question him. The joy of the knowledge that he loved her and that she returned his love thrilled her like the song of triumphant bugles.

Her heart was throbbing wildly as they passed through the Durland gate. At the door he took her in his arms.

"Oh, my dearest! I wouldn't lie to you; I love you with all my heart. You will write me, won't you—and don't forget the telegram? I shall come flying at the first possible moment after I get that. And don't trouble about anything. I want you to say you trust me and are sure of me."

His kisses smothered her replies.

"Be careful of yourself, dear. I should die without you!"

There were tears in her eyes as she fumbled for her latchkey. She watched him as he struck out with a long stride toward the city. She thought that he looked back and waved his hand out of the shadows just as she opened the door.

## II

It was long before she slept, but she rose obedient to the summons of the alarm clock and gave her usual assistance in the preparation of breakfast. At the table her silence and preoccupation caused her mother to scrutinize her closely.

"You don't seem quite like yourself, Grace. Don't you feel well?"

"Oh, there's nothing at all the matter! I had a hard day at the store yesterday."

"Maybe you ate something for supper that didn't agree with you."

Grace read into this suggestion a hint that her mother and sister were not without their curiosity as to where she had dined and the manner in which she had spent the remainder of the evening. They had been accepting so meekly her silence as to her evenings away from home that it occurred to Grace that it would serve to allay suspicion if she told occasionally just what she had been doing.

"I had dinner at the Sycamore with an acquaintance—a man from out of town—and we went to the concert. The music was perfectly wonderful. And then we walked home."

She was pleased with her own audacity and smiled as she saw Ethel and her mother exchange glances. But having ventured so far it would be necessary now to explain how she met Trenton and she was prepared to tell a small lie with which to fortify the truth when she saw that something more was expected.

"Mr. Trenton, did you say, Grace?" inquired Mrs. Durland.

"Yes, mother; Mr. Ward Trenton, of Pittsburg. I knew his niece very well at the university and as he comes here now and then Mabel wrote and asked him to look me up. He's ever so nice. He's been everywhere and talks wonderfully. He's a mechanical engineer. He's rated very high isn't he, daddy?"

Trenton's name had impinged upon Durland's consciousness and he put down the morning newspaper to which he had been referring from time to time during the consumption of his breakfast.

"Ward Trenton? Yes, he's one of the ablest engineers in the country. Did you say he'd been here Grace?"

"Yes, he comes here now and then. I had dinner with him last night at the Sycamore and we went to the concert. I meant to tell you about him. He knows of you; he says he often runs across your name in the patent office reports."

"Did Trenton say that?" asked Durland, greatly pleased.

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Roy had to wake up a farmer and telephone for help. Outside against the barn lay the wreckage of his joy ride.

"Yes; he spoke of you in the kindest way, father."  
"You don't say! I wouldn't have thought he'd ever heard of me. He's in touch with all the big industrial concerns of the country," said Durland.

Her father's interest in a man so eminent in his own field did not prevent Ethel from taking advantage of Grace's unexpected frankness to ask:

"Was it Mr. Trenton you were with at the theater a few nights ago? One of the girls in the office said she saw you there with a very distinguished-looking man."

"The very same!" Grace replied promptly. "You know Mr. Trenton is awful keen about Mabel, so when she wrote him that I was at Shipley's he came in to see me."

"Does she live here?" asked Mrs. Durland.

"Oh, no! Her home's in Jeffersonville or New Albany, I forget which."

"It was certainly kind of her to have Mr. Trenton look you up," said Mrs. Durland. "But I wish you'd asked him to the house. It doesn't seem just right for you to be going out with a man your family doesn't know. I'm not saying that there's any impropriety; only I think it would give him a better impression of all of us."

"Oh, I meant to bring him up but he's so terribly busy! He works, everywhere he goes, right up to the last minute. And it was much simpler to meet him at the Sycamore."

"He's married, is he not?" asked Ethel.

"Oh, yes!" said Grace, heartily regretting now that she had

opened the way for this questioning. "His wife is Mary Graham Trenton, who writes and lectures."

"That woman!" exclaimed Mrs. Durland plainly horrified. "She's one of the most dangerous of all the foci of decency

in this country! Last spring we had a discussion of her ideas in the West End Club. I hadn't known how utterly without shame a woman could be till one of our members wrote a paper about her."

"I don't know that Mr. Trenton accepts her ideas," said Grace. "He hasn't discussed them with me. He seemed rather amused that I had read her 'Clues to a New Social Order.'"

"You haven't read that awful thing?" cried Mrs. Durland. "What would become of the home and family if such ideas prevailed? That woman's positively opposed to marriage."

"Oh, I don't believe it's as bad as that! I think it's more her idea that where marriages are unhappy it's cruel to make people live together. But, you needn't be afraid that Mr. Trenton's trying to convert me to his wife's notions. I don't believe he's terribly tickled to have her gallivanting over the country lecturing."

"You can't be too careful, you know, Grace, about letting a married man pay you attentions. People are bound to talk. And Mrs. Trenton, being known for her loose ideas on marriage, naturally causes people to look twice at her husband."

"And at any woman her husband pays attention to," added Ethel.

"Of course I'm careful what I do," replied Grace. "Mr. Trenton is a perfect gentleman in every way and just as kind and considerate as can be. He gave me two of the pleasantest evenings I ever spent. You certainly can't object to my knowing a man like that."

"No, dear," replied Mrs. Durland, "except that it seems strange for a daughter of mine to be meeting a married man and having dinner with him and going to the theater when I don't know him at all."

Durland had lingered pretending to be looking for something in the paper but really prepared to support Grace in the event that his wife and Ethel showed a disposition to carry their criticisms further.

"I suppose we have to put up with such things," said Ethel, "but that doesn't make them right. I hope, Grace, you won't let your independence carry you too far."

"Well, Mr. Trenton has passed on and I don't know when he'll turn up here again, so you needn't worry."

"It's fine you can know a man like Trenton," Durland ventured from the hall door.

"Here's an idea!" cried Grace, springing after him to hold his overcoat. "The next time Mr. Trenton comes to town I'll try to have you meet him."

Having buttoned her father into his coat she snatched his hat and planted it at a rakish angle on his head. He submitted good-naturedly, pleased as he always was by her attentions.

"You bring Trenton down sometime, Grace. I've some old junk I'd be glad to show him," he said, glancing furtively at his wife.

"Grand! He's sure to be interested. It will be fine to bring you two geniuses together."

She flung her arm across his shoulders and walked with him to the front door.

### III

GRACE was amazed to find how little she knew of herself. She was like a child peering into a succession of alluring shop windows, the nature and value of whose strange wares it only imperfectly understands. Life was disclosing itself, opening new vistas before her, but the results were not quite what she had expected.

As to man, she now believed that she knew a great deal. Confident that she loved Trenton and without regret that she had confessed her love, she did not question her happiness.

She lived in a paradise whose walls were fashioned of the stuff that dreams are made of. She saw herself as a figure of romance and she looked up several novels in which a girl imaginably like herself had given her all for love, and she satisfied herself that her own case was far more justifiable than that of these heroines.

Her heart was filled with kindness toward all the world. On the day that brought her Trenton's first letter she went to her father's new shop in the Power Building carrying lunch for two from a cafeteria. Her father's silence in his hours at home, his absorption in his scientific books, had for her an increasing pathos. Mrs. Durland referred not infrequently to the fallen estate of the family in terms well calculated to wound him from the very tone of helpless resignation in which they were uttered.

Durland pushed his hat back on his head and stared as Grace appeared in the door of the dingy rooms.

"What's the matter, Grace? Anything happened?" he asked with his bewildered air.

"Not a thing, daddy. I just thought I'd come around and have lunch; so here's sandwiches for two."

"I never eat lunch," he said, turning reluctantly from the bench at which he had been at work.

"Well, you're going to today!"

Over his protests she cleared a space on the bench and laid out the contents of her packages—sandwiches, cakes and apples.

"The banquet's begun! Now go ahead and tell me how things are going."

"Just about the same, Grace. I'm working on an idea or two. Not sure yet just what I've got, but I think maybe I'm on to something that'll turn out big."

"You're bound to, daddy! You work so hard!"

"Cummings may have scrapped me too soon," he said.

He looked at her with an ironic grin and a fanatical gleam in his eyes that caused her to wonder for a moment whether from his constant lonely brooding he might not be going mad.

A man came in to see about some patterns he had ordered. They were not ready and while Durland expressed regret at the delay, Grace saw that his thoughts were still upon his inventions. The customer manifested impatience, remarking angrily as he left that if his work wasn't ready the next day he would take it elsewhere.

"Really, daddy, you oughtn't to keep people waiting when you take their jobs. If you'll only build up this pattern and model business you can make a good thing of it. This place is in an awful mess!"

As she began straightening up a litter of papers on one end of the bench a bill for the rent of the room caught her eye.

"Don't look at these things, Grace!" he pleaded, as he tried to snatch the bill. "I'll be able to pay that in a day or two. I got a check coming for a model and it'll cover the rent."

Her questioning elicited the information that the check had been expected for several weeks and that the man for whom the model had been made had left town without leaving his address.

"It seems pretty uncertain, daddy, and this rent's three weeks overdue. I have a little money in the trust company and I'll send my check for it."

"I don't like taking your money, Grace," he said as she thrust the bill into her purse.

"Don't you worry about that, I'd be ashamed if I didn't help you when you've always been so good to me."

"I don't see where I've done much for any o' you. I never expected you girls would have to work. You know I'm sorry, Grace!"

"Well, I'm perfectly happy, so don't you worry. Now I've got to skip."

"Nice o' you to come, Grace; but you're always good to me. By the way, I guess you'd better not tell your mother about the rent. She wouldn't like my taking your money."

"Then we won't say a word!" she whispered, touched by his fear of her mother's criticisms. She flung her arms about him and hugged him till he cried for mercy.

Her savings account was further depleted the next Saturday. She was surprised to find Roy waiting for her when she left the department at her lunch hour.

"No, sis; I didn't write I was coming. I've got to go back on the first train."

"But of course you'll see mother!"

"Well, I thought I might call her up," he said evasively.

"Call her up!" Grace repeated sharply. "If you're not going out home don't call her! Come and have lunch with me so we can talk."

Roy Durland was tall and fair, a handsome young fellow, though his face might have been thought too delicate, a trifle too feminine. One would have known that as a child he had been pointed out as a pretty boy.

"I hate like thunder bothering you, sis," he began when they were seated in the lunch room. "But I'm up against it hard. Harry Sayles and I got a car from Thornton's garage the other night and took a couple of girls out for a ride. It was Harry's party—he was going to pay for the machine. Well, we were letting 'er go a pretty good clip I guess when something went wrong with the steering gear and we ran smash into a fence and mused things up considerably. Harry and Freda Barnes were on the front seat and got cut a little. We had to wake up a farmer and telephone to Thornton to send out for us. Thornton wants fifty dollars to cover his damage, and of course I've got to stand half of it; that's only square. He's pretty ugly about it and says if we don't come through with the money he'll take it up with the college people. Now I know, Grace—"

"Yes, you know you have no business going on joy rides, particularly with a boy like Harry Sayles, who's always in nasty scrapes! Who's Freda Barnes? I don't remember a student of that name."

"Well, she isn't exactly a student," Roy replied, nervously buttering a piece of bread, "but she's a perfectly nice girl. She works in Singleton's store."

"That's one girl; who was the other?"

"Sadie Denton; you must remember her; she was cashier in Fulton's for a while."

"No; I never heard of her," said Grace eying him coldly. "You know plenty of nice girls on the campus and plenty of decent, self-respecting boys. There's not the slightest excuse for you. I suppose Harry provided the (Continued on page 144)"

OF course you will read this story right off—because Arnold Bennett is one of the masters of English fiction. And you will relish every word of it. But the next time you meet your own particular Mr. Hollins—then your enjoyment really will begin.



Illustrations by  
Lawrence Herndon

# Entirely Reasonable

by

ARNOLD BENNETT

MR. JACK HOLLINS sat reading the paper at the drawing room window on the first floor of his enormous house in Carlos Place, within a stone's throw of Grosvenor Square. It was a London afternoon, mild, languorous, and full of subtle color—full also of baffling promises. But Mr. Jack Hollins was only aware that the date was the twenty-first of May, and the locality the finest residential section in the West End of London.

He was a stout man of sixty, with a thick neck, short white hair, and a clean-shaven red face. He was neatly dressed in a provincial style. His figure was such that though the easy chair was capacious and he deeply ensconced in it, he seemed to be protruding out of it or hanging over the front of it. His eyes had a wary and dour expression, as though saying to the newspaper that the newspaper might fool half a million people but not him.

He had once had a brother, Herbert Hollins, with a reputation throughout half the Midlands for hearty tyrannical ruthlessness and a will power that rode down all obstacles—heaven, nature and mankind. Herbert fell ill once of pneumonia, and said to his doctor, "I've got a directors' meeting at Birmingham tomorrow, and I'm going to it." "I forbid you to go out," said the doctor. "I'm going to that meeting," said Herbert with terrible finality.

"You change your mind," Mr. Hollins exploded, "or else not another penny of my money will ever come into this house!"

"Very well, then," said the doctor quietly, "as you please, but if you go out you'll die." Herbert laughed, convinced that he was above the common laws of cause and effect. He did go to the meeting and he did die.

Mr. Jack Hollins used to recount this story with grim gusto, as creditable to his brother's character. Herbert, a widower like himself—their wives had both failed to survive the ordeal of living with them—left Mr. John Hollins half a million pounds. John was very rich even before that.

At first he had made a little money by hard work; then he had made a great deal by a fluky investment in a company that owned cheap restaurants in various Midland towns. Thence onwards he was persuaded, and others were persuaded, that he had a genius for finance, and events certainly favored this notion of his. In proceeding upon the principle that money breeds money, he had one inflexible rule, never to sell out at a loss. If a stock went down he held it obstinately, positive that since he held it and was a financial genius, it must ultimately rise. Often it did rise, and Mr. Jack Hollins's self-satisfaction rose with it.





"Your Captain can come when he likes. But whether I shall be in is another matter," said Minnie's father.

Occasionally, however, the company would go bankrupt, and then Mr. Jack Hollins had a momentary vague suspicion that he might have done better to spend his money instead of trying to force it to breed.

But he had a very serious and vexatious defect. Though he could make money he knew not how to spend. He was always being half-drowned under the flowing tide of wealth. He privately recognized the defect, admitting that he was a bungler in expenditure. The fact was that he had almost no imagination, and very few desires. He had bought the house in Carlos Place by a whim, a caprice, an impulse. It was very cheap. He noticed that business was gradually invading the region, and he thought that one day the place could be turned into a private hotel or a block of offices, at much profit. Having bought it, he had to furnish it. He employed a big furnishing firm. The cost of things generally startled him, whose youth had passed in the narrowest commercial provincialism, but he would pretend not to be startled. When the furnishing firm had furnished two floors he suddenly stopped them, not because the expense fright-

ened him, but because he could not see the sense of furnishing two other floors which he could never use.

He had a dim idea that Carlos Place demanded a butler, and he engaged one. As, however, he did not know how to treat butlers he did not get value out of his fine specimen. He bought the finest cigars obtainable, and smoked them, but improperly. He bought the finest wines possible, but he could not tell a Burgundy from a claret, or a champagne from a sparkling Moselle. He bought a magnificent motor car; to roll ruthlessly in it through the best streets pleased his vanity, but the car was, all the same, somewhat of a Frankenstein's monster to him.

He enjoyed a moderate amount of solitary travel, and would make acquaintances in the saloons of steamships, and in the smoking rooms of first-rate large hotels in fashionable health resorts. He had no friends, didn't need friends. He showed sagacity in not attempting election to a good club; he would have met with trouble in a good club; not the most ruthless man can successfully contend against a whole club; but he sometimes walked along Pall Mall enviously.

The magnificent motor car, with its chauffeur, was below him, waiting at the curb. It had been waiting for two hours. He argued thus: "It's my car. I pay the chauffeur. I might want to go for a ride and I might not. Why shouldn't the fellow wait?" The argument seemed to him answerable. He gazed critically at the car. Then he resumed the newspaper, and read an account of the new clinic which Mr. Shelton Shelton had built and endowed and presented to West Ham. He knew that Mr. Shelton Shelton was the owner of the newspaper and a very rich man, who, by dint of creating free clinics all over London, had become one of our leading philanthropists.

A small and insignificant car, driven by a young man of military and aristocratic deportment, drove up to the door. An elegantly dressed young woman jumped out; the aristocrat chatted an instant with her, saluted her, and drove off again.

"Who's your man, my lass?" Mr. Hollins gruffly greeted the girl when she entered the drawing room.

"Captain Coggeshall," said she, in a tranquil, low voice, with no trace of self-consciousness.

"What brand of a captain?"

"In the First Lifeguards."

Mr. Jack Hollins, anxious above everything not to show emotion, said nothing for a few moments.

"Who is he, anyway?"

"He's the eldest son of Sir Maurice Coggeshall, Baronet, ninth Baronet I believe, or perhaps it's only eighth."

Then Samuels, the butler, conveniently brought in tea, of which Minnie partook, but not her father.

"Where did you meet him?"

"At a *the dansant* at Queen's Hall. I was with Sarah Allbright; she knew him. He's interested in painting."

"How long since?"

"Oh! About three months ago."

The conversation ended there.

Minnie Hollins opened the lofty window, and, with the earnest eye of an art student—estimated the values of the surrounding architecture, foliage, pavements and sky, and sought for possible subjects therein. She also responded sensitively to the delicate calm beauty of the afternoon. There was something in the softness of the clouds and in the faces of passers-by that touched her. She was a tall well-made girl, with a figure whose excellences none would dispute, and a type of countenance which most women would call beautiful and most men would not. Her gaze was patient and benevolent.

Mr. Jack Hollins continued doggedly to read the paper, just as though he had been alone in the drawing room. Mrs. Hollins had been dead six years. He had then been faced with the problem of looking after a girl, aged seventeen and delivered from boarding school, without letting her be a nuisance to him. Having complete confidence in her because she was his daughter, he had solved the problem chiefly by ignoring it. A girl living in a big house in Carlos Place must be well dressed. He went further and said that she might be very well dressed. She had to dress herself, and he was satisfied with her efforts; indeed he was as proud of her appearance as he was of the appearance of his car. But he paid all the bills. She had no allowance, and not too much pocket money, considering her exalted position. Similarly, though she attended to certain branches of the housekeeping, Mr. Hollins was the sole authoritative housekeeper, paying all bills and giving nearly all orders. To Samuels, Minnie would begin: "Father says—"

Mr. Hollins's deep sagacity told him that a girl must do something in order to keep her out of mischief, and the choice of what she did was not important. He saw no harm in her learning to paint, and so she was permitted to go to the Slade School. He saw no harm, either, in her creating a studio from an attic. He never entered the attic if she was there, but occasionally when she was out he would nose around. At the Slade she made friends, and the girls among them she would now and then ask to tea, but in the back room on the ground floor, and without her father. There was absolutely no other entertaining. With the same friends she would go to infrequent concerts and plays, and semipublic or club dances. Secure in the conviction that she was no fool, Mr. Hollins let her be—on the clear, hard understanding that she let him be. They went to church together about once a fortnight; and perhaps once a year he would take her with him on a voyage. He seldom questioned her. He never kissed her.

One night a fortnight after the conversation about Captain Coggeshall, Minnie said:

"Captain Coggeshall wants to come and see you, father."

"Who's he?"

"You remember—I told you about him. He's in the First Lifeguards."

"Oh!"

"Can he come tomorrow?"

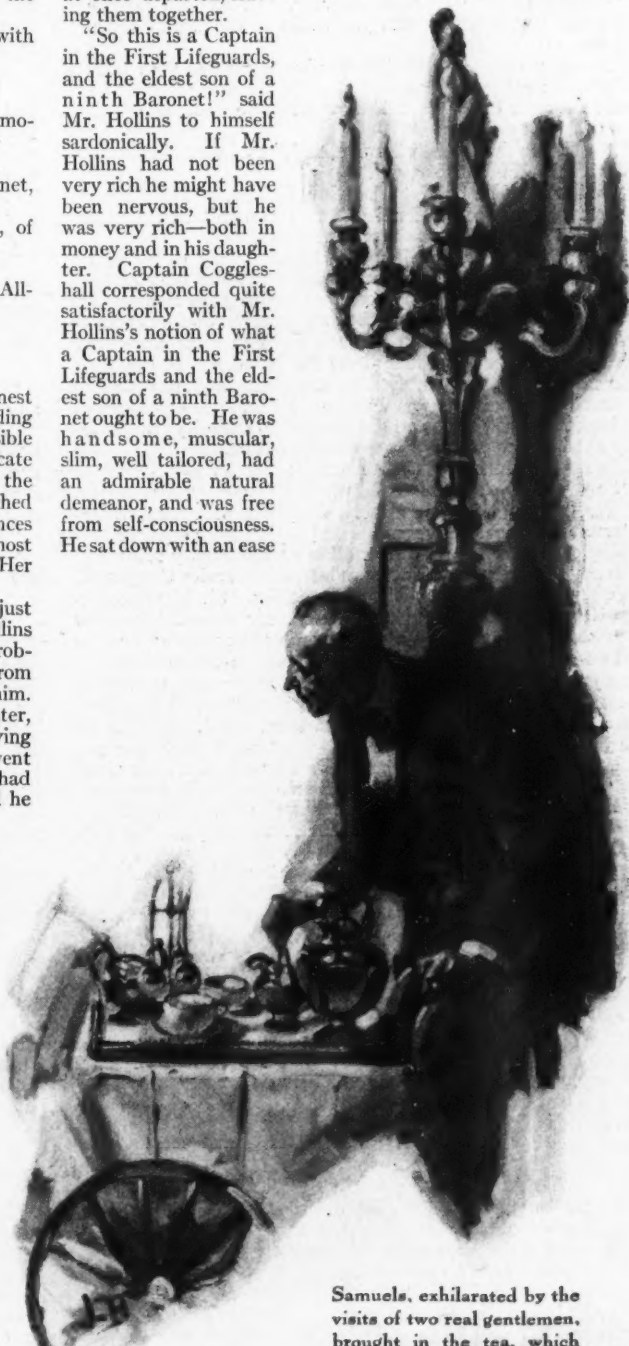
"He can come when he's a mind to. But whether I shall be in's another matter."

"I'll write and ask him to come tomorrow afternoon."

As she left the room, Mr. Hollins surreptitiously examined his girl for traces of emotional excitement, but he could find none. He looked up Sir Maurice Coggeshall, Bart, in *Whitaker's Almanack*. Yes, Sir Maurice duly existed.

Captain Coggeshall came in the insignificant car the next afternoon and was introduced to Mr. Jack Hollins by Minnie, who at once departed, leaving them together.

"So this is a Captain in the First Lifeguards, and the eldest son of a ninth Baronet!" said Mr. Hollins to himself sardonically. If Mr. Hollins had not been very rich he might have been nervous, but he was very rich—both in money and in his daughter. Captain Coggeshall corresponded quite satisfactorily with Mr. Hollins's notion of what a Captain in the First Lifeguards and the eldest son of a ninth Baronet ought to be. He was handsome, muscular, slim, well tailored, had an admirable natural demeanor, and was free from self-consciousness. He sat down with an ease



Samuels, exhilarated by the visits of two real gentlemen, brought in the tea, which Mr. Hollins did not want.

that Mr. Hollins could not have emulated, and talked with facility, and yet with proper restraint. Only his voice was rather quieter than Mr. Hollins would have expected. After a few exchanges Captain Coggleshall announced that he wished to marry Minnie. He gave his age, which was thirty-one, and his record, and his expectations. He admitted that for the present he had nothing but his captain's pay and what Sir Maurice allowed him, which was not much because Sir Maurice was poor.

"Ho!" ejaculated Mr. Hollins.

"I should like to know, as soon as it is convenient to you to tell me," said Captain Coggleshall, "whether in principle you have any objection to the marriage," without adding anything about feeling himself quite unworthy of the peerless girl.

"I don't say that I have, and I don't say that I haven't," Mr. Hollins answered with brutal indifference. "But have you got enough to keep my daughter decently? Or haven't you?"

"Enough to keep us from starving, Mr. Hollins. But my father and I were hoping that you would do the usual thing and make a settlement."

"Ye were, were ye? Well, as you've mentioned your father, perhaps the old gentleman had better come and see me." He would not refer to the Captain's parent as "Sir Maurice." No, he would not!

"My father lives in Northumberland," said Captain Coggleshall with undiminished suavity.

"And what if he does?" asked Mr. Hollins. "This business is worth a journey to London, isn't it? Or doesn't the old gentleman think so?" He spoke as it were menacingly.

Captain Coggleshall replied that he would try to secure his father's presence in Carlos Place. A few minutes later he took leave. Mr. Hollins rose and accompanied his guest as far as the door of the drawing room, and then remembered that he ought to have rung the bell to warn Samuels to be in attendance. He called out, "Samuels," loudly over the bannisters of the great staircase, shook hands firmly with the suitor, and returned to his seat by the drawing room window. He said not a word about the interview to Minnie, and she showed no curiosity; but naturally she had her private source of information.

The next morning at breakfast he said:

"So you'd leave me to fend for myself?"

"Yes, father," said her father's daughter, with a quiet, unfathomable, benevolent smile.

That ended the family conversation on the mighty subject.

Money is wonderful. Two days later Sir Maurice Coggleshall made a personal call upon Mr. Jack Hollins. Sir Maurice conceived that he was performing a really very astonishing act of condescension. But being a gentleman, or the ruins of one, he kept this conception absolutely to himself and to his son Marmion. Upon the arrival of Sir Maurice it seemed to Samuels, the butler, that things were looking up a bit in Carlos Place. Visits from two obviously real gentlemen, one of them titled, and with an adorably curt, imperious and curse-you-for-a-flunkey manner, exhilarated Samuels, and he became a better butler for a time. The style in which he showed Sir Maurice to the drawing room left little to be desired. Indeed Sir Maurice asked himself how the deuce these upstart plutocrats contrived always to wipe up all the best butlers.

Sir Maurice was a very different man from his son. At the wheel of a taxi he could easily have passed for an old London cabby who had taken to mechanical transport late in life. He was stout and thick-necked like Mr. Jack Hollins. He had white hair, and luxuriant white eyebrows. He wore a black-and-white check suit, white spats, and a white tie. He moved quickly. His voice was enormous.

"How d'ye do, Sir Maurice?" said Mr. Hollins. But do not imagine that he added, "Very good of you to come all this way to see me," for he did not.

However, he recognized in Sir Maurice a fellow creature, and did for him what he had not dreamed of doing for his son—he ordered drinks and cigars. Sir Maurice puffed and blew and gulped and smacked, and talked loudly about railway trains, crop prospects, the prospects of revolution, and the folly of the nation. Then suddenly he said:

"By the way, Mr. Hollins, I suppose we can settle our little affair in two words. My son wants to marry your daughter. I agree. I had the pleasure of meeting your daughter yesterday at Claridge's. And I can only repeat: I agree. I agree. If you do—"

"Well, Sir Maurice, I'm like yourself. I'm not one for beating about the bush, and I can give you my answer in two words—I agree."

"That's a great whisky, Mr. Hollins, if you'll allow me to

say so. What settlement do you intend to make on Miss Minnie? Roughly speaking, of course. I don't want to press for details. It's a matter for our lawyers."

Mr. Hollins replied harshly in a voice as loud as Sir Maurice's own:

"I'm not much for settlements."

"But surely you'll make a settlement, my good sir. It's the usual thing."

"It isn't the usual thing in my family. It may be in yours. But we're speaking of my daughter, and my daughter belongs to my family."

"But surely, my good sir—"

"As I say, I'm not one for beating about the bush, and if you'd like it straight, I shall make no settlement."

At this moment these two stout, thick-necked, red-faced old men grew stouter and thicker-necked and more red-faced, and it appeared to be a nice question which of them would explode first. But simultaneously they both reflected and saved themselves by astounding efforts of self-control.

Mr. Jack Hollins spoke again:

"I'm not asking your son to marry my daughter. It's him and you as are asking me to let my daughter marry him. I'm not going to buy your son. It's the duty of a man to keep his wife, and if he can't do it he'd better not marry. If your son is marrying my daughter for my money, he can't have either. If he isn't, let him prove it. That's how I look at it. If there's any hole in my argument, happen you'll tell me."

A pause. Sir Maurice finished his whisky.

"I'll think it over," said he, dashed and irritated. "I'll think it over."

"Nay," said Mr. Hollins. "You'll decide at once, before you leave this room. If you don't, I shall. My daughter's my daughter, and there isn't going to be any hesitation."

"Do you mean—"

"Ay! I mean all of it. We're talking business and I mean all of it."

"You know, Mr. Hollins, you've succeeded in putting me in a very awkward position. I don't want to disappoint Marmion, and yet I have a duty, a—er—serious duty—I appreciate your straightforward methods. I'm all in favor of straightforwardness. Saves trouble in the end. Of course! Of course!"

"Then you won't take my daughter as she is?"

"No, Mr. Hollins, I don't say that. I must beg you not to put words into my mouth. I don't say that."

"Then you'll take her as she is?"

"I see no alternative, Mr. Hollins, and that's flat. I see no alternative but to accept your conditions. May I help myself?" Sir Maurice poured out more whisky.

Mr. Jack Hollins became grimly happy. He had defeated the ancient Northumbrian family. Minnie would be Lady Coggleshall in due course, and he would hear servants refer to her as 'her ladyship.' His mood softened as the mood of Napoleon would soften in intimacy after vast triumphs.

"You needn't worry, Sir Maurice," said he. "My will's made and has been this long time. Minnie's the sole legatee, and she'll come into fifty thousand pounds a year when I kick the bucket. And I don't mind telling you now, as we've come to an understanding, that I shall give her five thousand a year to do what she likes with. I'm a reasonable man—"

"You are. You are, indeed, Mr. Hollins. Very generous of you."

"But I can't be forced, and I can't be bullied."

Thus the marriage of Minnie Hollins and Marmion Coggleshall, Captain in the First Lifeguards and heir to an ancient baronetcy, duly came to pass. Mr. Jack Hollins behaved characteristically. First he said to his daughter:

"Look here, my lass, none o' this fashionable wedding nonsense, or you won't have your father at your wedding."

"Oh, father!" answered Minnie softly, "I should hate it. So would Marmion. You needn't trouble about that. We'll have the marriage at a registry office, and I'll be married in my going-away dress."

The plan was altered, and it was altered by her father, little by little. The old man couldn't get the idea of orange blossoms out of his head, nor the vision of his daughter in a white dress and veil. He had insisted at first that the wedding party should consist of the two persons chiefly concerned and two witnesses, himself and Sir Maurice. And to this he adhered strictly, because he was afraid that in the midst of a concourse he might make himself ridiculous. In all other respects, however, the wedding was fashionable. The wedding (Continued on page 101)



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Maurice's

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**J**ULIA FAYE studied to be a school teacher, but the movies tempted her from that career and after an apprenticeship under Griffith she now plays important rôles in Paramount Pictures.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KADL STRAND



**JUNE WALKER**  
*the ingenious bride*  
in "Six Cylinder Love"

THE PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE W. HARRIS

WALKER  
shows her  
der Low

**L**EATRICE JOY is a New Orleans girl who was on the  
stage when discovered by Paramount Pictures.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALAN VERNON

51





**PAULINE LORD** has scored as "Anna Christie" in Eugene O'Neil's new play

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FRANK  
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ADAMS

*thinks this is the best  
story he has ever  
written.*

*"The other day I ran into a most  
dramatic human situation," he told us.  
"It cried aloud to be made into a story—  
a new kind of story for me. So I wrote  
it for all I was worth. And here it is."*

## Without the Net

Illustrations by Charles D. Mitchell

"WHAT is your name?"  
"Carlotta Steffan."  
"Age?"  
"Seventeen."

"Address?"

"Mrs. Bellowne's boarding house on Brevoort Place."

"Business?"

"Circus acrobat."

"Your relation to the deceased?"

"His sister."

"Please relate to the court exactly what took place on the night of June 14, 1916."

The spectators in the courtroom took a long breath. It was on the testimony of this witness that the prosecution expected to secure conviction.

The judge leaned forward a little in order to see her better. Every eye was fixed on her except that of the prisoner in the dock. He kept his gaze steadfastly on the floor. The witness was very composed for a girl of her age. She did not seem to shrink from the frank curiosity she was exciting. Perhaps because of her profession she was so used to the scrutiny of thousands that the regard of a few hundred was easily supportable.

She was good looking, dark, slender, with short waved or wavy hair, large eyes with unbelievably long lashes. To the public she was not a familiar sight in street clothes. From seeing her in tights nearly every person in the room knew that she had a wonderful figure and that she had the reserve strength of a highly tempered coiled spring. The act known as "The Brown Brothers and Carlotta" was internationally famous and had been the feature at the Hippodrome for two entire seasons.

"We all had dinner together between shows, my brother, Mr. McAvoy and myself. They weren't really related to each other

It was unbelievable  
that Carlotta, as she  
sat there, was actually  
planning to kill that  
clean-cut boy.

at all but had worked together for years before I grew old enough to be taken into the act.

"While we were eating, my brother and Mr. McAvoy quarreled about Mac's, I mean Mr. McAvoy's, drinking. An acrobat, as everybody knows, has no business to touch a drop. This is especially true of trapeze and shallow diving acts which are timed to fractions of a second. The two men had always been the best of friends, more than that I should say, so that the quarrel was a great surprise to me. So was the drinking for that matter, because usually neither of them used stimulants of any sort.

"On the way-back to the theater Mr. McAvoy got away from us and when he finally showed up he had managed to get several more drinks. My brother and I were in the dressing room which the two men used, waiting for him to come and wondering what we would do if he did not show up. So I was present when he arrived and stood, swaying back and forth, in the doorway.

"My brother called him a few harsh names at which Mr. McAvoy only laughed. He came over to where I was sitting on the edge of a trunk and said, 'Lottie loves me anyhow, don't you, sweetheart?' and kissed me. It was the first time he had ever done anything of that sort and I was terribly surprised. I did not think much about it though, considering the fact that he had been drinking and also that I had begun to regard him almost as much one of the family as my real brother.

"But Michael, my brother, was furious. He yanked Mr. McAvoy back and struck him across the face, knocking him down. Mr. McAvoy got up but did not strike back. He seemed quite sober again and was wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. All he said was, 'You'll be as sorry about this as I am, Mike.'

"I implored my brother to send word to the manager that we couldn't go on that night but he refused. We were headliners and of course it would have been difficult to replace us on such short notice. Mr. McAvoy said he would be all right in a few minutes and went off to the baths to stand under a cold shower until he felt perfectly steady again.

"While he was away I went to my own dressing room and got into my stage clothes. So I did not see either of them again until we met in the wings just before our act. At that time Mr. McAvoy seemed to be about as usual and so far as I could see the act itself went as smoothly as it ordinarily did. I really do very little in it myself as I am only learning the hard stunts and my brother wouldn't let me try them in public and without the net, so I had plenty of opportunity to watch.

"But I'm always nervous about the finish. The two men used to laugh at me because I said I held my breath at every performance. It was a dangerous feat no matter if it did go like clockwork. I mean the somersault and high dive my brother did from the flying trapeze. If you never saw the act it went like this: Mr. McAvoy used to swing back and forth hanging by his heels and toes from one trapeze. My brother started from a stand at the other side, swung across on another trapeze, let go, did a double somersault, catching wrist to wrist with Mr. McAvoy and then when they were in just exactly the right position dropped into the ten-by-ten glass tank on the stage below. It took a lot of nerve and exact timing on the part of both acrobats.

"I dreaded that part of the act even more than usual that night, but there was nothing I could do. Once a routine gets started before an audience it sort of hypnotizes a performer and he goes on without wanting to sometimes.

"The men climbed to their two stands. Mr. McAvoy swung his trapeze out once by itself, just as he always did. Then he jumped off with it, turned in the air to a knee hold, slipped to the toe hold and was ready. Mike let his bar travel out once alone in time to Mr. McAvoy's and then he started. Mr. McAvoy caught him all right after the somersaults but—"

The girl paused, tried to speak but could not go on. She fainted.

## II

THE prisoner, when asked if he had anything to say in his own defense, seemed not quite to understand what was expected of him. He rose, looked all around the room as if searching for some one who was not there.

Finally he addressed the judge, not officially, but as man to man. "Tell her—tell Lottie—that I loved him!"

That was all.

The judge held him for the grand jury on a charge of manslaughter.

The girl, Carlotta Steffan, when she was informed of the commitment, clenched her fists and beat upon the table in front of her.

"It was murder, I tell you, it was murder! What is the penalty for manslaughter?"

"A term in the penitentiary," she was told.

"Very well," she said, "I can wait! Tell him that—when he comes out I'll be waiting!"

## III

THAT much of the story I learned from a newspaper clipping and from Mac himself. The rest I had a minor part in.

I got to know McAvoy in the State penitentiary. It was not entirely an accident that he should have picked on a man so much older for a pal. For one reason it was because we were the only two men in the institution who admitted that they were rightfully imprisoned. Practically every convict, according to his own account, is doing time for a wrong committed by another, or else he has been railroaded to confinement by some one who wants him out of the way.

McAvoy never said anything like that. On the contrary he was surprised that his sentence was so light. In his moodiest moments he regretted that the penalty had fallen short of execution.

"It would have been easier, John," he told me on one such occasion, "much easier than to remember and to wait. Because I'll get it anyway."

In that connection he told me, finally, about the girl and the message she had sent to him.

"That was only the idle threat of a child," I told him. "She'll forget that when she grows up."

"I don't think so," he replied thoughtfully. "Their name is really Steffano and they belong to a race that doesn't forget or forgive. I don't blame her. I would feel the same way if there were anyone whom I could blame for Mike's being dead. Why, we were kids together and I guess we never even had a thought we didn't share—" His voice trailed off as he remembered.

One other reason why we got together was because I had been a circus performer myself once. You don't find many professional acrobats in jails and we were both glad to talk shop to some one who knew the language.

I had long since done my last stunt and had let my muscles stiffen up but Bob McAvoy was a pretty marvelous piece of human machinery at that time. He often used to hold himself at horizontal arms' length on the bars of his cell door and go through a series of setting-up exercises that would be difficult enough for the average man standing with both feet on the ground.

He grinned when I called him a monkey. "My brains are all in my muscles, John. I have to keep 'em from getting rusty."

Yes, Bob and I were the best of pals. We were that even long before the time he saved my life.

That happened one day in the mess hall when Rudentski, a Polack doing time for criminal assault, suddenly went clean off his nut—got a killing streak.

The mess hall was never cleared so rapidly before, not even when we had a fire. I was the only one who didn't break a sprinting record for the door. One of my legs was made by a carpenter and I can't run on it. Besides I'm pretty heavy, now, and awkward. I did the best I could but the Polack caught me. Bob was the one who came back for me. He lifted the crazy man clean up over his head and held him there, squirming, until they brought the strait-jacket.

That act and Bob's generally model conduct as a prisoner earned him a modification of his sentence which was not a very heavy one in the first place.

Bob confronted me with the news of his release wearing a rueful grin. "If I'd been wise I'd have acted like a wildcat so that they'd have to keep me here for the good of society. I wonder if she'll be waiting for me at the gate."

## IV

It was pretty lonely for me after Bob left. I hadn't realized how much I had tied to him. And I worried about him, too. He had been gone a month before I heard from him.

Dear John:

I am still in the land of the living. Haven't seen or heard of her since I came out. I'm not hiding or anything. Quite the contrary. I'm running an ad. over my real name for a partner for my act. But as soon as an acrobat finds out that I am one of the Brown Brothers he runs from me as if I had smallpox.

I've tried to get a job as a "single" act but even the one ring wagon shows have turned me down. But I keep in condition by digging ditches for the gas company and I get a little exercise on some apparatus I've put in a hayloft that a lively man lets me use Sundays. The hay is just as good as a net for all ordinary purposes.

I know what I've got to do. In order to overcome the prejudice against me I've got to be so darn good that they can't afford to let me waste my talents on a shovel. That's what I'm going to do. I've got the idea for a sensational novelty, a real thriller. I can do my part if I can only induce some one to work with me.

His letter switched to other topics of more interest to me than to the general public.

Two months later I got another one.

Dear John:

She has found me.

I thought that would end the waiting but, if anything, it is worse now.

It happened last Sunday. I was practicing, up in my hayloft, using a dummy hung on a bar for a partner. I had just finished doing my routine, and was climbing up aloft to put the dummy in position for a try at my big stunt when some one came in through the trapdoor in the floor.

I knew without looking who it was and I didn't look either, to make sure—I just braced myself for the shot that was coming and went on as if nothing had happened—pretended I didn't know she was there. We acrobats have alarm clock muscles anyway, I guess—they go through with a routine all by themselves almost automatically.

When I had finished—and it is a good trick, I'll admit it myself—I dropped from my trapeze into the hay; landed right at her feet almost—facing her.





"It's a whirlwind act," she said, "but you need a good partner. How about me?"

She has changed, John, a lot. The kid has become a Madonna, a Madonna of Vengeance, I guess. As a youngster she was good looking in a kind of an elfin way. Now she is stunning—not beautiful exactly, because to my notion beauty implies insipidity, but she is arresting, distinguished, dignified,

lovely—I've used up all the adjectives I know and none of them quite fits.

We looked at each other squarely for a minute. "Well?" I asked finally.

"It's a whirlwind act!" she replied critically. "You need



a good partner in it and it will be the best aerial trick in the business."

"I know it," I confessed. It seemed silly to discuss the merits or demerits of my act at this time but I certainly was willing to. It was better than to bring up in words the events of the last times we had seen each other.

"Have you engaged anybody yet?" she questioned.

I shook my head. I might as well give her the satisfaction of knowing that agents of vengeance other than herself were pursuing me. "No one will work with me," I explained.

"I will!" she replied. "Will you let me try it?"

Of course I didn't comprehend right away but I nodded and she began to take off her clothes. Acrobats, naturally, do not regard their bodies as anything to be ashamed of and I was not surprised or shocked when she stripped down to shirt, stockings and knickerbockers and kicked off her shoes.

"Try some easy stuff first," she suggested. "I'm in condition but we're not used to working together."

I guessed finally what her motive was in offering to work with me. It is to be near me so that she can finish me off when she sees a good opportunity. She frankly hates me, has come for her revenge and she's going to make me stick or acknowledge that I'm a coward.

We did a few limbering-up stunts on the floor and then climbed up to my homemade apparatus. John, you can believe it or not, but Carlotta can do every darn thing that I can do myself, and before we finished that day we went through the entire routine of my act including the big stunt. I dropped her the first time we tried it, pure buck fever, I guess—but when she came flying through the air next trip I made a clean catch.

It's ridiculous, I suppose, but I feel strangely elated about the whole affair. I know it's the beginning of the end but I don't seem to care. Perhaps I was tired of waiting. It will be interesting to wonder just when and how the blow will fall. Perhaps also I need human companionship. Not that Car-

lotta shows any signs of being companionable when we are not rehearsing—I don't even know where she lives or eats or goes between times—but it is something to be working with some one who understands and is interested in the same sort of thing that I am myself.

Give my regards to the best warden in the world, and my love to you, old he-hyena, the fiercest animal in his zoo.

Yours,  
Bob.

The note of interest in life in that letter was mighty reassuring after the discouragement of the one before it, but I can't say that I felt particularly happy over the thought that Bob had come to the last lap of his race, was face to face with the thing that would finish him sooner or later. Because I was just as sure as he was what the girl's purpose was. She never would have deliberately sought out the man who had killed her brother for any other reason except revenge. If she were trying to forget she would have kept away from him.

I braced myself to learn of his death but I got another letter.

Dear John:

I'm still here. I guess she hasn't seen a good chance yet. God, she is wonderful! And you ought to see our act. Old timer, your phantom hair would curl at the new tricks we are putting into it. We're with the big show now at a salary I'm ashamed to mention. You see I don't expect to finish the season anyway so I don't care what I do, and she'll take any chances that I will and go me one better.

I'm having the time of my life, though. It's funny to be so happy on the brink of the precipice like this but I can't help it. Perhaps the mere thought that every day may be the last makes me take all the fun I can out of each one. It's a most amazing good old world.

Yours affectionately,  
Bob.



"You've been just like a mother to me, John," said Carlotta. But I could remember only that she was the avowed enemy of my best friend.

He may have been happy but I wasn't. It was silly, I told myself, for me to feel like that about a boy who was no relation. Everyone has to go sometime—I was at the short end of the rope myself—why make a fuss about the means of one man's taking off?

But I couldn't forget how blithe he was—how wonderfully, cheerfully Irish—even in prison. I never had any children myself—he took the place I'd kept for all my family.

And how I hated that woman!

## V

MINE was a life sentence for—well, never mind! I did what they said I did, although back in the days when I started in doing time they were harsher about such things than they are now. I didn't expect to get out, ever, and was not even greatly pleased when the Governor pardoned me. I had no relatives outside and I was used to the life I had been living for twenty-five years.

But you can't quarrel with a pardon. I knew why I got it. I was getting old and they were afraid I'd die on their hands—my age was fifty-eight the day I left, but I could have passed for seventy, easy. That's what prison life does for you.

I stepped out into the unfamiliar world with every nerve exposed. Even the air beyond the gate seemed harsher, more merciless. God, what should I do with the little bit of life that was left! Where should I go? There was no one to care, no one to welcome me back to the land of the living. It had been too long since I went away.

It was autumn, it was cold, the low clouds were getting ready to spill themselves. I stood there shivering and the wind or something brought tears to my eyes. I was ashamed of being so helpless, so old.

Because of the tears I didn't see the closed car driving toward the prison gate. I noticed that something stopped before me where I stood on the curb but I wasn't prepared for it when the door opened and an arm reached out to pull me inside.

I cried like a baby on his shoulder. He had one strong arm around me and the other patted my hand.

"Son—" I started to say, but choked.

"You darned old idiot!" he interrupted. "What do you suppose I got you out for if I wasn't going to take care of you?"

He had arranged the whole thing with the warden and had kept the best part of it—his coming for me—as a surprise. The day of my release had been scheduled so as to fall on a date when his show was playing in the next town and he could come up and meet me.

I dropped twenty years off my age right away and began planning what to do with the rest of my youth. Ain't it funny what a difference it makes just to have somebody care about you—and show it?

Of course, Bob had to work that afternoon. I met Carlotta in the dressing tent just before they went into the ring.

Bob was right. She was an unusual girl. Perhaps it was because I knew the story but I think that, even if I had not, I should have guessed that her life was actuated by some one, deep, consuming purpose. A little less beautiful and she would have been judged a fanatic—a trifle more spirituelle and she might have been a Joan of Arc.

Her figure, of course, was perfect, a little less obviously muscular than that of most women acrobats. Carlotta accentuated her slimness by wearing black tights, with a perfectly absurd and useless soft white ruff around her neck.

For some reason or other she liked me. She didn't want to either—I could sense that she was scowling internally over the



unnecessary complications caused by my presence. Her grudging admission of myself to her limited circle helped to make the sunshine of that—my happy day.

I went out to my seat and got there in time to see most of their act.

My word, it was some act! Having been a performer myself I could appreciate that the stunts those two did were even more hazardous than the public realized. I thanked heaven a hundred times during the twelve minutes they were in the air that there was a good strong net between them and the ground.

The finish was a variation on the old diving act. They left the trapezes and rings they had been working on and climbed to a new set, higher up. Bob swung out by his heels on a trapeze and Carlotta stood on a tiny platform attached to the center pole, her head just clearing the canvas. Below her was what is known to the profession as a "bounding mat," which is a piece of canvas stretched tight on strong springs which will throw back into the air any heavy object dropped into it. This particular mat was only about four feet square.

The band stopped, all but the trap drummer who began his roll as she stood there balancing, increased the tempo and the noise as she jumped and gradually died away after she had hit that postage stamp square of canvas and it had catapulted her back into the air and, after a triple somersault, into the strong grasp of Bob who was then at the extreme end of his swing. The length of the drop and the height of the bounce made it a tremendously spectacular climax. I was glad when it was over. I was also glad that there was a net.

Bob gave me a job. I was to be his dresser. He needed somebody to help him with his things just about as much as a cat needs two tails but I fussed around and tried to justify my existence by keeping everything in apple pie order including the apparatus for the act.

I did little things for Carlotta, too—darned if I know why, except that it seemed impossible to hate her even when I caught her regarding Bob with coldly speculative eyes.

She seemed so wistfully young to be carrying so big a burden of revenge. Sometimes she laid aside her reserve when she was alone with me—she just had to let down with some one and I was one of the few with whom she came into daily contact.

Once she asked me how I came to know Bob. I told her the story.

"You think a lot of him, don't you?" she asked.

"I'd die for him any minute," I told her without exaggeration. I would! Then I added, "If anything should happen to him, I reckon it would kill me, too!"

She nodded her head in acknowledgment. "We have to count on that when we give our love to anyone or anything—or our hate."

"What are your sentiments toward Bob?" I demanded. I had never intended to ask but the trend of the conversation developed the question automatically. "Which do you feel—love or hate?"

"Both," Carlotta replied. "He was my idol before my brother died and now—"

"And now you ought to forget—"

She shook her head. "I can't." And then inexplicably she cried a little on my shoulder. "I wish he was somebody else."

All of which didn't exactly make sense, but it gave me an idea as to how the land lay. Also it indicated how hopeless it would be to try to argue her out of a purpose she had evidently arrived at after weighing the considerations against it.

In Buffalo she was taken sick. My own opinion was that it was nature's revulsion against the interminable turmoil of her mind. She wouldn't let Bob touch her so I was the one who carried her, tights and all, from her dressing tent to the hospital ambulance.

She had some kind of a fever and I stayed right with her during three weeks of it. She seemed to want me and Bob asked me to. Carlotta talked of him a good deal in her delirium, mostly things that I did not care to repeat to him. I say "mostly" because a few times she called for him in terror and cried desperately as she told herself that she would never see him again. I knew what was going through her mind and I tried to reassure her that Bob was still alive. I even had him come in once, but she thought he was a ghost and that only made matters worse.

The show went on, Bob with it doing a mild single, while I stayed behind with the girl. She got well rapidly—that is the fever left her but she didn't seem much happier. For my presence she seemed absurdly grateful.

"How can you be so darling to me, John? I don't remember

what a mother is like because mine died when I was born, but I don't believe one could be any gentler and dearer than you are."

Perhaps it was silly for an old man to be so pleased at that declaration from the avowed enemy of his best friend. I certainly can't explain it to anyone who has not known Carlotta—anyone who had, would not need an explanation.

I qualified my devotion to her by telling her in so many words, "I'd do anything in the world for either you or Bob."

She sighed. "Of course."

We, Carlotta and I, took a two weeks' vacation after she left the hospital. We were at a seashore resort when she made the decision.

"We'll go back to the show tomorrow."

So we went back to the big top. Bob was glad to see us. For him, too, it had been an anxious period. Both of them seemed to be happier together. I was the only one whose peace of mind was improved in direct proportion to the number of miles which lay between them.

The act went great, better than ever, if anything, and in a week or two Carlotta and Bob began talking of working without the net.

I objected. Bob took me aside and overruled me quietly but firmly. "I know what you mean, old timer, but your fears are groundless. What could she do? I never swing to her once during the entire routine and there's no danger of my ever dropping her—not so you could notice it. No, don't worry about it. It's just good business to cut out the net. There isn't a single thing that she can do to me—you see I know what you're thinking—not a single chance while we're off ground."

His argument was logical enough but I couldn't help feeling, uneasily, that he was wrong.

## VI

It seemed as if my fears were really groundless. The net was taken away and the act went without a hitch. There was quite a lot more thrill in the drop to the bounding mat than there had been before. I could have lunched from my heart twice a day while I watched that particular part of their performance. Suppose Bob should be one-hundredth of a second late or early on his swing!

But in a month even I had begun to relax a bit from the tension. Life had to be that way—shell fire to a soldier gets to be as casual as peeling potatoes. I realized then that my fears had really been just as much for Carlotta as they had been for Bob. No, I don't know how I account for that. You get that way, I guess—get to loving the people you are with, I mean. And it was quite true, what Bob said, the way the act went it would be the girl who would get hurt if anything went wrong.

Still the danger was not over. I knew that from the fact that Carlotta couldn't be happy. She tried, but she was thinking too much—plotting, scheming—driven to it by something outside of herself—hereditary method of thought perhaps. The season was drawing to a close. The circus was going into winter quarters. We had reached our last stand, a two day engagement in a semi-Southern city.

After the performance Carlotta and Bob went their separate ways back to the sleeping cars where most of the performers bunked whenever possible. I am an old timer and I sleep better on the lot. We didn't have sleeping cars in the days when I was with the wagon shows as an acrobat.

Ordinarily I sleep through anything, rain, thunder, and riot. Just this once the melancholy of autumn seemed to affect me. I was enjoying an unaccustomed fit of depression. The world was such a gloomy place that it kept me awake. The drip of rain on the canvas over my head served as a constant reminder of the futility of human happiness.

After an hour I decided that I probably was not going to sleep, so I quietly got up to take a little smoke and perhaps have a chat with one of the night watchmen. The most intelligent of the all-night men was Larry O'Neil, but I couldn't seem to find him. I thought perhaps he might be in the big top, so I slipped in there not caring particularly to patrol the entire lot as it was about a foot deep in Dixie mud.

An empty tent after midnight is as eerie as a haunted house. You feel like a ghost in it yourself. The sawdust deadens any sound your feet might make and the things that swing and glisten faintly in the half light from street lamps outside might just as well be spirits of the departed as parts of aerial acrobatic apparatus.

Larry wasn't there—at least I didn't see anyone with a lantern. I was about to turn and leave the tent (Continued on page 700)

The story of a woman who learned that  
men never come up to a woman's ideals  
—and that that is why men need  
women.



The villagers seemed  
to be regarding  
Emma Putney with  
strange furtiveness.

# As Is

by

**WILL IRWIN**

Illustrations by

John Alonzo Williams

**M**ISS HARTWELL opened her lock box at the Carleton village post office and drew out her daily batch of mail, most uninteresting from the envelopes—only bills, circulars and one notice of a parcel. She must wait, then, until Mr. Stallings threw open the window for the crowd of mere general delivery people and holders of unlocked boxes. As she began opening envelopes, Miss Hartwell was in that misty state known to all artists whether with pen, brush or piano, when the mind is half asleep and one only seems to be thinking—but thinking deep. She ran dimly over an advertisement for a new pigment, a notice of an uninteresting exhibition, an appeal for the children of Poland; their monotony seemed to sing her mind further to sleep. She looked up absently; the range of her eye caught Emma Putney, clerk at Martin's general store, whom she had noticed before only as a super in the drama of village life.

Before her mind registered "Miss Putney," her eye registered "purple." That was the very shade, too, which had been haunting her consciousness ever since she woke that morning—a purple expressed with blue undertones; as hard as some precious enamel, as haunting as moonlight. The shadows of Miss Putney's rather hollow eyes suggested that tint—were of exactly that tint. As Miss Putney's head moved in the process of extracting the Martin Company's mail, the light kept modeling new forms in the undulations of her cheeks, her eyebrows, her chin. How, Miss Hartwell wondered, had she failed to see all that before? Here was suggestive beauty appealing to get itself painted; once, she felt, it must have been beauty which it took not merely an artist to see. Hitherto Miss Putney had seemed to her, when she

noticed her at all, merely a spare-built old maid. Momentarily, the woman in Miss Hartwell overcame the artist while she paused to regret that she herself was not aging in that way. To her, the forties had brought only the burden of extra flesh. In her youth she had been plump; now she was frankly fat—she had ceased to have illusions about that.

Miss Hartwell's eyes followed Emma Putney as she moved her bundle of mail over to the post office desk, began sorting it. Then Miss Hartwell was aware of another impression cutting through the mists of her mind. Somehow, Emma Putney—an inconspicuous figure in her blue summer dress, her serviceable, rubber-soled white shoes—seemed to be attracting covert attention from the villagers assembled for this regular morning business. In the corner three women, two of them natives, one a "summer person," were whispering. This stopped as Emma Putney came towards them; and the summer person made an ostentatious pretense of gazing round the room for something. Miss Hartwell, noticing this also, might have wondered had not the rays from the windows at that moment caught Emma Putney's shifting, bare head; made splashes of high lights. Her hair must have been fairly blue-black once; now, as though dusted by time with some dull powder, it, too, suggested that haunting purple. Even her eyes, dark blue like meadow flags, could be faked into the scheme. Then Miss Hartwell's everyday mind awoke with a bang. That shade of purple—Miss Putney there—her recent urge to go back from landscape to portrait again—the picture for the Fall Exhibition where she had especial and particular reasons for wanting to make a good showing.

Emma Putney gathered up the Martin Company's mail and simultaneously the delivery window banged open. Miss Hartwell turned to join the line, absorbed in the growing vision of her study in purples. As she carried her parcel out to her little runabout, it still haunted her. But she did notice as she passed through the door a kind of flurry in the group of fishermen and farmers who were assembled outside now, still talking. It was signaled by a quick, low, "that's him!" followed by another voice, saying with full throat, "Hello, Bob!" She glanced up modestly and was aware of a figure new to her memory of Carleton—a middle-aged

man, looking, she felt, neither exactly a villager nor yet a summer person—shabby genteel, perhaps. She noted that he wore his clothes with a city air, but that they seemed, nevertheless, a bit threadbare; that his shoulders had a droop which suggested almost a shuffle. Into Miss Hartwell's mind, illumined by the purple of her vision, shot a spurt of disagreeable old memory. She shut that out as she had schooled herself to do, and fell to planning diplomacies for getting Emma Putney into her studio of mornings.

The painting of Emma Putney had passed from the stage of blocking out, and of futuristic splashes of color; detail was emerging from the mass. Half unconsciously to Miss Hartwell, the work was taking command of itself, was growing from a mere study to a portrait, was reaching the point where the artist's conception of the sitter's character begins to impress itself upon the canvas. And Miss Hartwell found herself perplexed by the direction it was taking. She had not counted upon that dark undertone. It played hide-and-seek with her; never, she felt, had she exactly seen it. It was as though whenever she looked down at her canvas that dark visitor came; she glimpsed it, when she looked up to squint along her maulstick, only in the act of departure. This wouldn't do at all; it seemed to be throwing everything out of gear; she hadn't set out to paint a study of a lady with a tragedy. Casting about for a device, she went back over her memories of Emma Putney—those few meetings in Martin's store, that morning at the post office and her own approach to the delicate subject of sitting as a model. Emma Putney had refused at first, politely and yet bluntly; and then, as Miss Hartwell was turning away, had called her back with a sudden, "maybe it could be fixed." Miss Hartwell had explained that she could paint only by morning light; this would involve getting her forenoons off. Could not Miss Putney arrange to work evenings for a while? "Maybe I could begin next week," Emma Putney had answered, a little hesitantly; and Miss Hartwell had felt that she was struggling with some factor which she did not quite want to confide.

For four days Miss Hartwell painted, making almost absent conversation from the surface of her mind. Emma Putney answered only with commonplaces or at best with shy bits of village news. Then that mysterious subconscious mind which thinks for us while we are asleep, which wakes us in the morning with our problems solved or complicated, with all our purposes different from those of last night, took hold of Miss Hartwell's work. In spite of her will she was painting not only a study in purples but an image of a soul. That soul was probably beautiful, with a stark beauty all its own, were it not for this cloud of turgid mist which kept sweeping across it. The cloud, by the fifth day, seemed to be spreading, to envelop even her own consciousness. That, and her chatter of student days, brought glancing in and out of her mind a picture which by sheer force of will she had long disciplined herself to blot out—the garden of a peasant cottage in Fontainebleau, a nightingale singing from the chestnut grove beyond—it would not down. Melancholy broke into irritation. Almost explosively, Miss Hartwell dropped her hands into her lap, making with her brush a splash of Prussian blue on her neat painting apron, looked her model squarely in the face.

She had caught full sight, now, of the dark visitor. Emma Putney was returning her gaze absently. Every line of her face was drooping; the purple shadows had turned black. And Miss Hartwell, though she was doing her best to control her irritation, let a spurt of sharpness into her tone as she said:

"I can't paint you this way, you know!"

It was as though this remark were an electric spark which,

leaping from one saturated cloud to another, produced a thunder-clap. Emma Putney's eyes filled, overflowed. Suddenly, her hands, her head, her shoulders dropped on to the prim old Pembroke table which Miss Hartwell was painting in as a detail, and she was crying quietly yet with a kind of inner force which shook her from head to foot. Miss Hartwell, a little remorseful and more alarmed, became at once all woman. She gathered Emma Putney against her wide bosom, patted her, said little comforting words. Miss Hartwell waited until the storm had exhausted its fury, until Emma Putney had become merely limp, disposed her like a sack of grain in the Windsor chair, went for cold water and towels; and all the time she was talking a feminine patter, half baby talk. Emma Putney submitted to the ministrations of a cold wet towel. Then, disengaging herself gently from Miss Hartwell, she spoke for the first time:

"I could kill myself—carrying on so!"

"You were tired," said Miss Hartwell.

"No, I'm not tired," said Emma Putney, flatly and finally. "I haven't been sleeping well lately. I wish sometimes," she added almost under her breath, "that I could get tired."

"I didn't know you were ill when I asked you to pose," said Miss Hartwell. "Forgive me; but you should have told me."

"It isn't that," began Emma Putney, and then stopped abruptly; for the tears were rising again in her eyes.

"If there is anything I can do to help—"

Emma Putney raised now her dark-blue eyes, their purple shadows misted with mauve, and looked the painter squarely in the face. The desire to confide—almost the necessity to confide—was trembling on Emma Putney's lips, beaming through her eyes, agitating her shapely hands. Miss Hartwell went back to her chair, mechanically picked up brush and palette, as mechanically set to mixing colors.

"You might tell me about it—if you wish—I'm safe, you know—" she said.

Her native chariness made its last flutter in Emma Putney's reply:

"Might as well, I guess." She hesitated. "He's coming back again—and I don't know what to do." She hesitated again.

"It's always 'he' with us women, isn't it?" said Miss Hartwell, putting an imaginary spot on her canvas with a perfectly dry brush.

"I s'pose so. But this—it's a little different. It's lasted a long time. You know the Searles place over by Cornbury, not the old Searles place—the other one?" she asked unaccountably.

Miss Hartwell nodded, and added aloud:

"The one we call 'the old lady'—it's just that—"

"What do you know about it?" asked Emma Putney rather sharply.

"Nothing, except about its passing from the hands of its last owner—"

"That was Bob!" said Emma Putney shortly. "Bob Searles."

"Oh!" said Miss Hartwell. This Bob, whoever he might be, was the man in the case. Then returned to her mind that subdued flutter in the post office on the morning when she had marked this woman for a model.

the stranger who had shared attention with Emma Putney.

"He let it go," said Emma. "He let everything go. Me too. Like that—" she opened and closed the hand so studiously posed along the arm of the comb-back Windsor chair. Then suddenly she plunged along:

"I never knew him until I was grown-up—people didn't have so many cars in those days as they do now—he had the first one I ever rode in. I'd just begun to work in Martin's. He came over buying paint and we got acquainted. One Sunday I was walking back from church. He came along in his machine and

### Emma Putney had decided all men were beasts

"*MEANIN'* my man?" challenged Lida Nelson. "My man a beast! You take that back—you skinny old maid, you!"

Yet just a moment ago the long-suffering wife of Jim Nelson had called her husband "a wallerin' hog"—had called him that in Emma's own presence.

"What if he does drink rum now and then?" Lida went on. "He's a good husband just the same. You pity me, do you? What have you got to pity me about? What have you got to show for your life?"

And so it was that Emma Putney learned her lesson about men and women and their mutual place in that strange confusion called life—the lesson which makes this story something more than a story.





"He said he loved me," Miss Putney explained, "and I guess he did—as much as he could love anybody."

asked me to take a drive. Well, there wasn't any excuse for refusing. I guess it began then——"

She ran down.

"You—began to—to—like him?" prompted Miss Hartwell.

Emma Putney nodded.

"More. I was crazy about him. I guess crazy's the word," she added bitterly. "Maybe at first 'twas part because he seemed so rich. His mother had been dead 'bout two years then. She left him quite a lot of property. He said he was a curb broker up in town. But I guess he wasn't working much—just spending what he had. I didn't know that. I thought he was a successful business man. And by and by—I wouldn't have cared whether he was rich or not—I cared so much about him. I was awful happy," Emma Putney went on meditatively. "Riding round the country with him, going to dances over to Cornbury. Mother liked him, too. She didn't like most young men." Miss Hartwell, half woman and half artist, noticed here how, at this chronicle of old felicities, the shadows of Miss Putney's face seemed no longer to be drawn in purple but in rose.

"He said he loved me. I guess he did, too—as much as he could love anybody. When he asked me to marry him, I don't know why I kept him waiting—said I wanted to wait a year. Maybe I was so happy I didn't like to spoil it. And maybe I sort of guessed."

Miss Hartwell was pretending to measure angles with the handle of her brush. She did not speak, but her eyes asked:

"Guessed what?"

"That he drank," said Emma Putney. Her voice held all the horror of that special sin in the American decalogue which has resulted in the Eighteenth Amendment. "I knew he took drinks sometimes—I'd smelled it on his breath. 'Twas the only thing about him I didn't like. I spoke to him about it after—after he asked me. He promised he'd stop if I wanted him to. He seemed to for quite a while. But often when we were going out somewhere together he'd call me up on the telephone and say he was detained by business—and his voice wasn't quite right, though I didn't see it then. But one night he came when he wasn't ex-

pected. I was upstairs. Mother called up that Bob had come to take me out. It was summer so I only had to put on my hat. I didn't notice there was anything wrong till we were out in the machine and started—I was surprised and glad. But——"

She paused here, as though about to withdraw behind her native silences and inhibitions. She had now frankly abandoned her posing, sat leaning forward, her elbows on her knees, her chin in her hands. Just as frankly, Miss Hartwell had stopped painting.

"He was drunk," said Miss Hartwell, not as a question, but as a statement of fact. Emma Putney nodded.

"He—he hurt me—grabbing me—" she said. "I was mad and I was scared—" She stopped again.

"I should think you would have been," said Miss Hartwell, "in a fast automobile with a drunken man——"

"No, it wasn't exactly that," said Emma Putney, "it was Bob I was afraid of. I got him to stop—something had to be done. I let him—" here her color rose—"let him kiss me. 'Twas the only thing to do. I couldn't get him to go home. Then I thought of something. I asked him if he didn't want to take me to Cullen's roadhouse for supper. 'Twasn't a nice place, Cullen's. They sold there. But I knew Jake Cullen since he was a boy and I wanted help. Well, he went. 'Twas just as well, because we hadn't more'n got to Cullen's before he tumbled over and went to sleep. Jake took care of him and had Tommie Merrill drive me back in his buggy. Jake wouldn't 'a' told, I guess. But Tommie did, of course. Pretty soon the whole town knew."

"And put the worst construction on it," suggested Miss Hartwell.

"No," said Emma Putney, "I don't know's they did that. They sympathized with me. That was worse. I didn't want sympathy. I wasn't so much angry with him as hurt—dreadfully hurt. That's why I wouldn't see him for a long time. I didn't think I'd ever see him again if I could help. It was mother's doings that I did. I can't blame her, I suppose. He had money. She thought if only he'd reform—at any rate, after a while, I let him come. He cried like a baby. It's dreadful to see a man cry——"

"Yes!" said Miss Hartwell, lightly but also explosively as though the words came against her will, "it's dreadful!"

Emma Putney seemed to merge from her reverie, to become for the first time really aware of Miss Hartwell, other than as an impersonal confessor. Across the easel they were regarding each other eye to eye.

"You—you—" began Emma Putney. The painter nodded.

"My dear, when one is confiding, she doesn't wish to be bothered with other people's confidences," she said. "I'll tell you later if you wish."

"And I forgave him," said Emma Putney, "but he had to promise never to drink again. I guess he kep' it for a while. Then—he didn't come to see me Christmas day—I've never liked Christmas much since. That day I ran on to his Aunt Tilly Searles—you knew her?"

"She died last winter, didn't she? The old hip-roofed farmhouse over by Four Corners—"

"Yes—she's dead. That place of hers was the old Searles house. Bob's grandfather gave it to her after he came back rich from California and bought the big place over to Cornbury. I'd always known Aunt Tilly. She was peculiar. We children used to tease her. But she always came right out with things. She stopped me after church. 'You'll be waiting round today for that man of yours,' she said. 'You'll find him to home,' says she. 'He always ends up in his own bed,' says she. 'Woke me up at five o'clock this morning tryin' to borrow money,' says she, 'an' he could just navigate then. He's sleeping it off now if he didn't kill himself with his automobile on the way.' 'Borrowing money!' says I, for I'd begun, away down, to suspect. 'Yes, he's borrowing steady,' says she. 'You ain't fool enough, be you, to swallow that story about his brokerage business in Boston? Business! His business is runnin' through the property that his grandfather slaved to get. He's pretty near done that piece of business by now, judging by the way he's after me for money. But he's at the end of his string with me!' 'I don't believe it,' says I. 'Then go and see!' says she.

"I don't know why I did it—I tried not to, but after a while I got into my things and went over to Lacey's Livery and hired a surrey and horse and drove to Cornbury—straight to his house. He came to the door himself. Before he opened it he made an awful racket inside. When he saw me he did worse—he tried to kiss me again. You can imagine what he was like! More'n that, I was afraid of him just as I was that night in the automobile. I got loose from him and ran away. He chased after me but he fell down. I unhitched the horse and got in. He was up by that time. Just as I started he tried to grab the tail board. I hit back at him with the whip—didn't hurt him, I guess. But I wanted to. And after that—I didn't see him again."

"Didn't he try?" inquired Miss Hartwell.

"Oh, yes! He was over the next night. Mother tried to make me come downstairs but I wouldn't. Tried to see me at the store; so I took two weeks off and went to Concord. Used to write, too. I burned the letters. I used to pray I could hate him enough. And while I was in Concord they sold him out. Aunt Tilly was right. He hadn't a cent or a stitch left when they got through. He went away. I had two more letters from him postmarked New York. I burned them. I never knew where he was after that. Neither, I guess, did his Aunt Tilly."

She came to a full stop. But Miss Hartwell's black eyes said, "Go on."

"Then I went on working in Martin's—and mother died." So she summed up fifteen years; and Miss Hartwell knew there was nothing more to tell of that, really.

"But he's back," she said aloud.

"Yes. You see—his Aunt Tilly—well, I don't exactly under-

stand, she always seemed as mad at him as I was—Aunt Tilly willed all her property to him. He was her only relative but folks expected her to leave it to the town. She made her will three days before she died. She owned the old house and sixty acres of good land—and a little money. His lawyers found his address—he was away out in Kansas City. And he's come back to claim it."

"Do you see him?" asked Miss Hartwell.

Emma Putney flushed a little.

"Have to see him a little—nights. He'd come round the store if I didn't—and—and I guess I'm sort of afraid yet. He ain't exactly the way he used to be—not violent any more—broken maybe. Says he hasn't been drinking at all the last year; says he's stopped for good—" Here Emma Putney's faint blush became two spots of becomingly high color—"he's said that before."

"Then I don't see exactly," put in Miss Hartwell, "why you're so—so perplexed."

"It's something he says. He hasn't done very—very well. He was checking up freight in a basement when he got the lawyer's letter. He says if only I'd married him—I'd have pulled him through. He says



if I don't marry him Aunt Tilly's property may go—just the way his father's did. Maybe I ought to." Emma Putney was sitting up stiffly now in the Windsor chair, all the Puritan in the straight, sustained lines of her figure.

"And do you still hate him?" asked Miss Hartwell.

"I guess you can't keep up hating unless you're really bad," said Emma Putney. "You get so tired after a while."

"I suppose he's just weak," said Miss Hartwell. There was a meaning trace of emotion in her voice. "That was my trouble—he was weak. Perhaps it will help you a little if I tell what I did."

"Please do."

Miss Hartwell frankly laid down her brush and palette, folded her big, plump, capable hands in her lap, leaned forward, gazed into vacancy. But somehow the words would not run. She found herself merely sketching what she wanted to fill in.

"It was in France—he was—charming—but weak—and he lied



"Come here," and Lida pointed. "I want somebody should see his shame—his burning shame."

to me again and again—I broke it finally—and ran away from him. There are six months of my life no one knows anything about—that I don't remember much about myself. My mother came over and put me in a sanitarium in Vichy. When I began to get better, I went back to painting. And I astonished myself, I'd grown so. I'd been only a student before. Now I was a painter. I was hung in the Salon that year. And I haven't regretted it all."

"But I can't paint—or anything," said Emma Putney.

"No, but you can do one thing well—and that's what really counts," replied Miss Hartwell. "I've watched you round the store. Go away from it—go to the city—do your work and love it. Suppose I'd taken the other course—suppose you take it? He'll be good for a while—just so long as it's all new and fresh and beautiful. And then—but you've thought of that, I suppose?"

Emma Putney nodded.

"I guess you're right," she said. Then she seemed to pull herself out of her reverie. "Here I'm talking when you want to be painting."

"Yes, the light is going," said Miss Hartwell, taking up brush and palette. As Emma Putney fell back into the pose, the painter noticed that the dark visitor was gone. In his place reigned a kind of melancholy peace. When, during the rest of that morning, they spoke to each other at all, it was but to murmur commonplaces. Only as Emma Putney stood putting on her hat, she turned and said again:

"I guess you're right—I'm awfully grateful." There was in it all a tacit offer of friendship which Miss Hartwell understood, for she knew the breed. Her own "I hope I've helped you, my dear" was almost emotional.

Emma Putney left the studio on the brisk walk of determination. As she rounded a corner into Main Street, her pace slackened, and her gaze wandered from familiar object to familiar object. She would be leaving Main Street—perhaps leaving it forever—and she found herself, curiously, looking upon it as though for the first time. Everywhere, memories of old tragedies. And she was going to leave it all! She felt momentarily a certain exaltation in that thought. Late, all too late, there had entered her spirit the old American desire for the far frontiers. She couldn't do anything grand like painting—but she could run a store. Miss Hartwell was right about that. Before her glittered a vague but rosy vision of success. She was going to leave Carleton and—she shut out that idea, and willed that she should think only of leaving Carleton.

Her walk had become brisk again, and now she had reached the gate of Mary Black's house where she boarded. Looking absently across the picket fence into the next yard, she noted the back of Mrs. Nelson making a white splash in the shadows of the side door, and found herself inhibiting her own golden yet disturbing thoughts. For Lida Nelson, Lida Harlan that was, had a tongue which leaked gossip; nay, when she was roused leaked vitriol. It was as though Emma Putney feared that her thoughts might betray themselves, even across that distance, in her face. Yet Lida Nelson, for all her gossip and her occasional rages, enjoyed the kind of popularity which is granted only to the forthright. Emma, as the golden glow of far horizons died down a little within her, found herself harboring a shade of regret. Lida, of the strong, matronly figure and the bursts of vixen temper which no one took too seriously, Lida of the neat, precise, domestic ways, Lida with her burden of a rather shiftless husband—she wasn't going to see Lida much longer. She stopped, her

hand on the latch of the gate. Not only Lida but—in procession old schoolmates and friends, grown by imperceptible stages grayer with years, streamed through her mind. And into that procession there kept obtruding himself—but she closed the doors of her mind suddenly. Lida Nelson had turned in the doorway, had signaled to her with an imperative, almost hysterical gesture of a white-clad arm.

"Come over, Emmie—I want you!" she called. As she lifted her hand from her own gate latch and plodded a little wearily across the Nelson lawn, Emma Putney reflected that Lida, from her tone, was working herself into a temper again. Indeed, as she approached that side door, Lida darted out, seized her almost roughly by the sleeve, seemed to swing her inside of her spotless kitchen with its rows of jars arranged at mathematical intervals along the enameled cabinet, its brilliant steel-white stewpan splashed against a brilliant black stove. All this as a background to one soiled spot. Midway of the kitchen, Jim Nelson



half-sat, half-lay in a Boston rocker, his eyes closed, his open mouth emitting a stertorous snore. His coat and collar were missing, his trousers were splashed with mud; his blond hair, too long, was towed into a wisp over his forehead. The appetizing odor of the stewpan bubbling on the stove was pierced by a scent which gave Emma Putney a sudden shudder—stale alcohol. "Come here!" shrieked Lida. "I want somebody should see his shame—his burning shame!"

Jim Nelson's snoring stopped; he opened a pair of vague, ill-focused, bleary eyes.

"Ain't a shame," he muttered. "Credit to family. Fam'ly to credit. Fredit—" His eyes closed again; his snoring was shaken by a feeble laugh.

"Yes, you laugh!" screamed Lida Nelson. "You laugh!" She turned to Emma Putney and now her voice choked with rising tears:

"Knoved he was going to do it yesterday. Could see it the way he wouldn't look me in the eye. Didn't come home last night; an' this morning I sent the children away so's they wouldn't see their father make a wallerin' hog of himself. A wallerin' hog!" repeated Lida, her voice coming out in a sudden shriek. This shrill note reached the drunken consciousness of Jim Nelson. One eye opened; it was set, argumentative.

"Ain't!" he jerked. "L'il pink pig, 'swat I am. Nice, lil' pink pig."

"I'll pink you!" exploded Lida Nelson. "I'll pink you. You and that bootlegger Jake Cullen! I know! He's been selling for years. I'll fix him! Thank the Lord I've got a vote now. I'll vote him into jail!"

This mention of the proud right of the electoral franchise seemed to pierce the drunken half slumbers of Jim Nelson, bringing not unpleasant old memories.

"Rah for Harding!" he murmured, feebly and yet joyously. As though this spurt of enthusiasm had exhausted the last ounce of his energy, his head fell forward on to his chest, his eyes closed firmly. His snoring became regular, rhythmic. Mrs. Nelson's voice sank from hysteria to its workaday tone.

"He's got to be got out of here!" she said. "Mussin' up my kitchen this way!" Now the shrewish tone came back into her voice as she added: "If 'twan't for that I'd leave him like any other swill! Come along now!" She had wrapped her arms—big, muscular, yet motherly—around the inert torso. But she got no help from the drunkard, now perfectly limp. Across him, she glanced at Emma Putney. The girl stood immobile during this whole performance, never speaking, scarcely moving. Her face was a little white; her expression conveyed a slight distaste.

"Well, can't you help?" jerked Lida Nelson. "He ain't goin' to bite you, is he?"

It was the moment which Emma had been dreading with all her maiden modesties and fastidiousnesses. Nevertheless she stepped forward, laid a gingerly hand under Jim Nelson's armpit.

"Aw, take hold—take hold," exclaimed Lida Nelson, "like this!" Expertly, and as impersonally as though she were handling cord-wood, she flung Jim's flopping left arm over Emma's shoulder, took his right arm over her own shoulders. As they lifted him to his feet, some reflex action seemed to lend a little stiffness to his legs; he walked stumbingly, but at least he walked. Mrs. Nelson shoved open with her foot the unlatched bedroom door. It gave forth a fresh odor of lavender and freshly ironed linen; it revealed a picture of neat whiteness splashed by the high color of a braided rug, a patchwork bedspread. On that spread fell the practical eye of Lida Nelson.

"Dump him into the chair," she said. "I ain't goin' to have him messin' up my things."

They deposited Jim, sprawling like a wet mosquito. With quick, certain motions Lida Nelson took off the patchwork quilt, folded it carefully, accurately, put it into a drawer, took out a clean sheet, with it covered the bed.

"All right—we'll h'ist him," she said; and, Emma helping, half lifted, half rolled Jim Nelson on to the bed. Now, it seemed, Lida found leisure again to vent her wrath.

"Don't you think, you walking rum shop, that I'm goin' to undress you," she said. "You can just lay there in your filthy rags till Kingdom come for all of me!"

The sudden shift in position, the cool touch of fresh linen on his cheek, seemed to rouse Jim for the last time. He turned over, cuddled down like a child.

"Goo' night," he murmured, "get lil' sleep. In the mornin'" —the word blended with a snore.

"In the morning!" spat Lida. "You'll get what I'm goin' to give you before morning!" She turned away.

Emma Putney had stepped backward through the door. As

Lida crossed the threshold, their eyes met. And Emma spoke for the first time:

"My poor Lida—they're dreadful beasts, aren't they?"

The eye of Lida Nelson seemed suddenly to take fire.

"Who's dreadful beasts?" she said.

"Men—all men," said Emma.

"Meanin' my man?" Lida's voice came out sharply, like a sputter preliminary to an explosion.

"Of course," said Emma, half foreseeing what was to come, yet steeled momentarily by a disgust fifteen years old to resist even Lida's temper.

"My man a beast! You take that back—you—you skinny old maid, you!"

Emma's blood came to her face with a surge. She had caught the infection of Lida's anger; but passionate emotion, which in Lida came instantly to the surface, in her seemed only to mute all speech, to inhibit action. Her lips grew livid as though paralyzed, but her eyes returned spark for spark into Lida's.

"My man a beast!" Lida poured on. "Did he ever lay a finger on me or the children except in kindness? Did he ever skimp me anything? S'pose he does drink rum now and then? He ain't touched a drop—a drop, I tell you—since election. You pity me! What have you got to pity me about? What have you got to show for your life? Dryin' up when you might 'a'— And here her voice died away within her. Lida's rages went by short, intense spurts. This one was already exhausting itself; it had no longer the power to force herself into that inner shrine of Emma Putney's soul. Indeed, as though frightened now by that steady, hard, yet burning gaze—like molten metal—Lida took a step backward. But, as though feeling the necessity of saving her face, she concluded:

"You might 'a' had a job to do—you might 'a' been happy, too." She turned back into the bedroom. "Got to undress him now," she muttered. For once in her life Lida seemed to think that she had gone too far.

It was the utter paralysis of her anger which held Emma Putney for a moment in the doorway, while Lida laid capable, tender hands on Jim Nelson, began to unbutton his shirt. She saw him stir, rouse into a shadow of wakefulness; saw that once, as Lida's hand brushed his face, he raised his lips toward it. Of that she was less aware than of Lida herself. It seemed as though that little half-motion had poured over her a flood of divine goodness. In every curve as she bent over Jim Nelson she was mother—and lover. Emma Putney found her attention focusing oddly upon one little thing, one feature of Lida Nelson—that and a contrast. It was the area just behind her ear. As though blown away by the reflections which now chased each other through her mind, Emma's anger evaporated.

Of late she had found her mirror again. Through a long succession of past years it had been a mere necessity of decency. But since Miss Hartwell found her beautiful enough to be painted and since Bob—abruptly she killed the thought—well, her mirror had been a friend and familiar again. She had spent half-hours before it, arranging and rearranging her hair, confirming the beauties which Miss Hartwell said that she saw. Miss Hartwell and—again she thrust an unwelcome visitor out of doors. With the auxiliary reflection of her hand glass, she had even flashed vistas of her own head and face which, it seemed to her, she had not since her young maidenhood seen deeper than her retina. And she found herself hating that place behind her ear. Viewed carelessly it looked like crinkling parchment dusted over with flour. Inspected more closely, it revealed itself as a mesh of wrinkles. It seemed to her like a garment beneath which flesh and bone had withered away. But Lida—the flesh and skin behind her ear undulated smoothly from the neat collar of her white blouse to the neat coil of her saffron hair. Lida had never been really pretty except in her fresh teens. But Lida seemed to have been fed with some ambrosia for need of which she herself had starved.

Lida had slipped the sleeve from Jim's floppy right arm; it was time to go. The anger which had bound Emma's tongue and limbs had snapped away like the release of a spring. She turned and fled outdoors, across the lawn, past her own door. At the gate she hesitated a moment, put out her hand, withdrew it, gave a shrug of her shoulders, went on. Her mouth was set in its straightest Puritan lines; but Miss Hartwell, had she tried to paint her at that moment, would have used no purple for the hollows under her eyes. She went on round the elm shadows at the corner straight to Martin's; hesitated just a moment before she approached the window where the cashier sat crocheting.

"Millie," she said, "I wish you'd tell Mrs. Martin that I can't



"I just came up, Bob," she explained, "to say we'd better take hold of this farm—you and I."

come on today until three. I've got—" she hesitated momentarily, "I've got an errand to do."

Looking up from her crocheting a few minutes later, Millie's eye glanced through the door to the tiny washroom back of her cage. It caught the back of Emma Putney; she was winding up her hair in the motions of a hasty toilet.

Robert Searles sat in the doorway of his newly inherited house, the full July sunshine beating upon his broad Panama hat. He was gazing along the elm-bordered driveway which wound down

the hill to the Cornibury road. His brown hair was only slightly thinned over the forehead, only flecked with gray over the temples; his features were scarcely lined at all. One would have found it hard to say why he looked all of his forty years. Perhaps it was an impression that he was burned out within. Or was it exactly that? There was fuel there yet, capable of being lighted by enthusiasm or passion, as coke may be dully lighted after the volatile gases of the coal are burned away. He seemed to droop a little—the torso of his tall figure, his shoulders, the lines of his face. One could fancy that when he (Continued on page 108)

# The Breath of Scandal

by

EDWIN  
BALMER

Author of  
"Resurrection Rock"

Illustrations by  
James Montgomery Flagg



As Charles Hale entered the hotel dining room he caught sight of Sybil Russell sitting alone. But he dared not speak to her.

## The story opens:

OVER Marjorie Hale's home hangs the shadow of scandal. Her father has gone outside for the love he has not found within its walls. His wife, cool, unemotional and engrossed in her own interests, is unaware of the situation and so is Marjorie, until one evening at a dance she receives word that her father has been injured. Gregg Mowbry, an alert, likable young Chicagoan, and Bill Whittaker, his roommate, who is in love with Marjorie, accompany her to an apartment on Clearedge Street and there Marjorie learns of her father's relations with a Mrs. Sybil Russell, whose divorced husband has shot Hale.

Mr. Hale is rushed to a private hospital and Gregg waits to meet Felix Rinderfeld, a lawyer who specializes in the covering

up of scandal. Rinderfeld suggests that the news be quietly circulated that Mr. Hale, facing an acute organic complication, has agreed to undergo a secret operation in order not to worry his wife and business associates. Even Mrs. Hale believes this story. She has never been close to her husband, for her interests are centered in various "movements."

Marjorie, terribly upset by the prospect of scandal, goes to Rinderfeld's office where he urges her at all cost to save her father's reputation, in order that he may be elected to the presidency of his corporation. He warns Marjorie that Stanway, her father's ancient enemy in business, has probably had something to do with Russell's suddenly renewed "interest" in his former wife. If Stanway can get Mrs. Hale to drag her husband's name into court, then Mr. Hale's business future becomes a dead thing.

Rinderfeld tells Marjorie that the only way to fight Stanway is to pretend that her mother knows the entire truth. Bill Whittaker, upon being told this by Marjorie, becomes incensed. He believes Marjorie should tell her mother the truth, and that her father should be punished, even to the ruination of his business career. Also, Bill has become jealous of Rinderfeld's influence over Marjorie; and he even communicates this jealousy to Gregg.

But Gregg, in the meantime, has learned that Russell is in Chicago and tracks him to a saloon. Gregg is almost killed in the fight he provokes, but finally breaks his opponent's nerve and whips him. Gregg knows Russell will never return to Chicago.

Marjorie has received an anonymous letter, which is followed shortly by a call from the suave Stanway, her father's enemy. The girl tells him, to his consternation, that her mother knows everything. Bill is thunderstruck at the lie. They quarrel, and she orders him from the house; and Bill, never dreaming that Gregg is in love with Marjorie too, pours out his woes on his friend's shoulder.

Gregg now arranges a meeting with Mrs. Russell. She has only two things to say—first, that Mr. Hale has never given her a cent of money; that she has always earned her own living and paid her own way; second, that Mr. Hale came to her solely because he loved her, and that she intends to keep him. Gregg cannot help admiring her; for she, too, wishes to protect Marjorie. He drives out to Evanston to see Marjorie that evening, and to her indignation, tells her of his interview with Mrs. Russell. Marjorie has decided that she must leave her home and earn her own living as soon as her mother departs on her annual trip



A novel about real people that is being read and discussed by real people everywhere.

*Are there two kinds of men in the world? Or are all men alike? With her faith in her own father seared by the breath of scandal, Marjorie Hale makes up her mind to find out. So she starts out upon the strange adventures which make this, perhaps, the most thrilling instalment of a gripping story.*

to Europe. This Marjorie does after an unsuccessful attempt to exact a promise from her father not to see Mrs. Russell again.

Meantime, Charles Hale, having recovered from his injury, has been made president of the Tri-State Products & Materials Corporation and on the very night of his promotion comes home to share with Marjorie this proof of the confidence of others in him. He finds Marjorie gone and a note saying: "Do not expect me back and do not bother about me. I know exactly what I am going to do and have made all my arrangements." To Gregg she has confided that Rinderfeld alone will know of her whereabouts.

Marjorie is determined to end the epoch of protection, during which she has been kept so ignorant of life that she has failed utterly to comprehend her father's conduct. From now on she means to learn—truths! To this end she engages a room on the very street where Mrs. Russell lives, and she calls herself Marjorie Conway. She becomes acquainted with, and secures as a roommate, a striking looking, self-reliant girl named Clara Seeley, who is demonstrating in a drug store window. From her Marjorie hopes to learn many things.

One evening after she has begun living in her new home, she starts for a dance with Clara and two men of Clara's acquaintance. Marjorie feels herself to be on the eve of an adventure—a revelation in life. As she seats herself in the taxicab beside Mr. Saltro she notices, with some misgivings, that her newly found escort is deliberately removing his glove.

### The story continues:

**M**ARJORIE watched Mr. Saltro bare his hand and then wonder what to do with it as he gazed down at her; for she made no correlative move. She not merely kept on her own gloves but she thrust her hands under her thighs and sat on them—a bit of taxicab technique which evidently was new to Mr. Saltro and which puzzled him.

"We're going to Sennen's Hall," he said, and plainly it was a commentary on her extraordinary procedure.

"Yes," said Marjorie, blankly. "Clara told me."

"You haven't known Clara long?"

"About a week," Marjorie replied, and withdrew her hands from under her as the swing of the cab about a corner swayed her toward Mr. Saltro, who seemed to become in doubt whether her original posture had been taken to discourage an advance or was really an inviting offer of helplessness.

"Ever toddled at Sennen's?" he questioned, while he debated the alternative.

"No."

"Swell hall and fair music," Mr. Saltro said, with a certain charity of approval, professional in its tone.

"You're a musician yourself, Clara tells me," Marjorie said quickly, seizing the opening to turn his attention from herself to him.



She did not move. She did not flush. Her eyes, however, flashed a signal.

"Oh, I play the trombone a little!" Mr. Saltro admitted modestly; and though she caught a deeper breath than any of the last few minutes, she accused herself for weak prudishness for even momentarily thus making herself Marjorie Hale, at the start of her first evening as Marjorie Conway.

Here she was with Jake Saltro—trombonist of the Geyner Quartette, "jazz for dances, dinners, entertainments of all sorts"—and likely she could accompany him in a taxicab and even to Sennen's without risky revelations, if she held herself as Marjorie Hale, a good girl from an honorable, protected home. But that was exactly what she was not to do.

She was through with "protection" and false honor. Wild, reckless impulses leaped in her tonight; how long had they seemed utterly overwhelmed within her! Ever since that evening that Billy and Gregg came to dinner before the Lovell's dance, when she had come down with white shoulders in her too-low cut dress to shock dear, proper, absolutely safe Billy.

Now, in the taxicab beside Mr. Saltro, and wearing that same dress under her cape, she almost laughed aloud in contempt of herself as she thought back on that "daring" incident at home. Yes, at home and among her friends, chaperoned by her mother and Billy; and with Gregg and her other men friends who—as Rinderfeld had said—would consider themselves lower than dogs, if they let themselves actually consider dishonor of a girl such as she had been.

What was she now, she asked herself and appreciated that her escort was debating with himself the same question. She appreciated that, upon sight of her in this daring dress—which, in those days after her father had been shot, she had never altered—Mr. Saltro had made for himself a different judgment of her than evidently he had formed from Clara's report. So he decided upon the definite investment of the difference between the cost of half a taxi for four and a taxi for two.

At this moment, plainly, he was wondering whether he was "stuck," while she kept him talking about the trombone and his idea of dance music. He had no real enthusiasm for it so the talk died down and he gazed out of his window as the meter audibly clicked and clicked as they dashed along.

"I ought to pay for the cab," Marjorie thought to herself, guiltily, "or give him what he expected for it. Probably it's only his arm around me; I'm going to let him put it around me anyway when we dance."

"Nice spring night," said Mr. Saltro, almost sarcastically and slurring spring to express emotional expectation which one might naturally hold for such a season.

"Yes, it's the first time this year I've really felt it's spring," Marjorie rejoined, partly from the reaction to the recklessness in her, partly from her own amazement at the feeling which was hers to-night. Strange how at home, after her discovery of the fact of Clearedge Street, spring itself, though physically arrived long days ago, had been stifled within her and yet now spring could seize her when she herself was starting off from Clearedge Street.

"Some season, spring!" said Mr. Saltro, with marked diminution of his sarcasm and sitting nearer her. He held no reference, obviously, to budding trees and blossoming flowers or even to the softness of the evening air coming in the open window of the taxicab door. In so far as he referred at all, it was to the couples clasping each others' arms as they strolled "twos-ing" most heedlessly on the walks beside the boulevard down which the clicking taxi drove.

Mr. Saltro thrust a hand into a pocket. "Ever smoke?" he tried Marjorie, with revived hope as he drew out an elaborately chased cigarette case.

"Yes," said Marjorie, remembering the last time she took a cigarette—from Gregg, it was, in his car, on the way to Lovell's dance. How cheap to smoke then, between Bill and Gregg, and deny it now!

Mr. Saltro took out a cigarette for her. Momentarily he held it, and if she guessed correctly his thought, he was deliberating the tact of lighting the cigarette for her and passing it from his lips to hers. So she took one for herself but let him hold the match before her lips then leaned away again.

He considered her more approvingly. "Those your kind?"

She nodded.

"Have some of this?" said Mr. Saltro.

"This" was a silver flask with cup top, which he obtained from a hip pocket.

"What is it?" she asked calmly.

"Bourbon."

"Your own still or bootlegged?"

"Twelve dollars a quart," assured Mr. Saltro, proudly.

"You've taken a drink before now, haven't you?" he pressed quickly, feeling the threat of more prudishness.

"Certainly," Marjorie admitted honestly. "Often."

"This fine stuff! From the last half of a bottle; the other half never done anybody anything but good." He poured a cupful and drank it for proof. "Try one now?" he urged. "Look here, if you don't want to put a little pep into yourself and enjoy the evening, why did you ask Clara to have me take you to Sennen's? I like to carry a queen; I'm not crazy to drag a dumbbell to a dance."

He was pouring the cup full again and splashing some over. He would not force her to drink, she thought, but certainly he meant to hold the cup to her mouth for her. She took it, turned it in her fingers for a few seconds while he watched her; then she drank almost all the raw, stinky fluid, choking a little as she handed back the cup. He finished it and twisted down the cap.

"More whenever you say so," he offered.

The burning sensation in her throat gave way to warmth and a slight feeling of spinning fullness in her head; strong stuff, it was. Next Mr. Saltro would have his arm about her, she thought; but this did not happen until they were at Sennen's, had joined Clara and Mr. Troufrie again and were dancing. For Mr. Saltro was a gentleman, by Sennen's standards, at least; and Sennen's was no underworld palace. It took consistent care to be respectable. A man, usually, at least, had to take the trouble to gain an introduction to a girl before he spoke to her; no lady without escort was admitted; here and there were girls who actually were chaperoned; and many more came, or at least arrived, with their escorts in groups of four to six as Marjorie and Clara had; and in the wide, noisy, overdecorated hall, there was conspicuous and vigilant censorship of the dancing.

Sennen himself, a small, alert, dapper man in speckled dress suit oversaw everything, as Mr. Saltro, during his second toddle with Marjorie, pointed out.

"Sennen's certainly foolish—just like a fox," Mr. Saltro commented admiringly as he watched the little man direct a much larger employee to remove a certain too inebriated couple from the floor.

Mr. Saltro and Marjorie did not stop toddling; no one stopped for such an occurrence but merely turned, as they toddled, to keep a view so as not to miss any really interesting incident which might develop. "You got to hip-pack your own liquor here; he won't take no chance selling it. And look at the dancing, too; ever seen decenter than that? He seen from the start the extreme shimmy wouldn't keep on drawing the best people, and he cut out too much cheek-to-cheek stuff, too. Nice looking bunch, what d'you think?" And he renewed his clasp about Marjorie which had relaxed somewhat while he talked and he moved his hand slightly on her back while they danced.

Her back was bare, since she was wearing that dress her mother had bought for her. She had over her shoulders the scarf which her father, on that night so long ago, had insisted upon her using; but Mr. Saltro lacked the care for its proper placement which had distinguished Billy. Other men at Lovell's dance, and Gregg had been among them, also had lacked Billy's meticulousness for her. It was nothing new for Marjorie, when dancing, to have a man's bare hand below her bare shoulders; but there was something very definite—and something rather stupendous in its revelation—about the clasp of Mr. Saltro on her flesh.

To be fair with him, it was not individual to Jake Saltro. Sam Troufrie held her, not in quite the same way, but with the same sensation; other men—Clara's friends—held her so, with one exception. It was more amazing to Marjorie Hale, when she glanced about at the nice looking crowd circling her; for they were nice looking—girls prettier and livelier and yet quite as "nice" looking as most at Lovell's dance and more modestly dressed, the majority of them.

Marjorie herself was, from her undress, as conspicuous as anyone there. Indeed, Sennen had censorship on décolleté; and Mr. Saltro at first had had his doubts about his partner "passing," but had been too delicate to say so till he was certain that Sennen had seen her and passed her.

The men were, most of them, nice looking, too; they were cruder, of course, but generally more energetic-looking and more interested in life than the ex-college boys of the suburbs. And as they danced with the girls under Sennen's watchful eye. Marjorie realized that if she had come in merely to look on and had not offered herself as partner of Saltro and his friends, she scarcely would have suspected that anything in particular was going on on the floor.

"I'm starting home now; gotta work tomorrow," Clara yawningly announced to Marjorie at half-past twelve. "You don't need to come; Jake'll like to stay."

But Marjorie went and with Clara, four together in the taxi on the long ride to Clearedge Street, during which Mr. Troufrie frankly kept Clara in his arms and he, as frankly, kissed him; and so far from minding observation, Mr. Troufrie genially jeered Mr. Saltro for his conspicuous loneliness on his seat.

Alone with Clara in room No. 12 at Jen Cordeen's, Marjorie tensely dropped off her cape, went to her glass and stared at herself. Then turned about to discover Clara out of her dancing dress and limp on her back on the bed, with arms stretched above her head and yawning peacefully at the ceiling. "Gawd, I'm sleepy!"

"Sleepy!" Marjorie shot back so excitedly that Clara startled up and sat, leaning on her hands.

"Why, anything happen to you tonight, dearie?" she demanded with suspicious concern.

"Anything!" Marjorie repeated, glaring at her roommate. And she gave a gesture of hopelessness.

"Bourbon don't keep me awake," Clara volunteered, as though having come to the conclusion that Marjorie complained of excitement from that. "Does just the opposite to me. Just want to sleep; that's all." And she yawned again but did not lie down. "Come on, get it off your chest, kid," Clara invited, pulling out a couple of hairpins and shaking down her hair.

"Clara, every man I danced with tonight—but one—was—"

"What?" urged Clara indistinctly, for the hairpins between her lips.

"Trying me!"

Clara's hair had fallen, perhaps by accident, before her face. "Sure," she said, still impeded by hairpins. "You were a new one to them and mighty good looking; and who'd you think I was steering you up against? A bunch of dead ones?" And she put the rest of her pins in her mouth and tossed back her hair.





"You and I might just as well have a show-down right now, Marjorie Whatever-your-real-name-is. What're you here for?" Clara demanded.

Marjorie's impulse was to bolt from the room; for the instant she had a home in Evanston to which she could flee; then she controlled herself. "You needn't get angry at me," was all she said.

"You needn't be so superior to my friends. Are you, anyway? Are you?" Clara demanded clearly, gathering the pins from her lips and depositing them on her bed. "You and I might just as well have a show-down right now, Marjorie Whatever-your-real-name-is. What're you here for?"

"I've told you," Marjorie evaded.

"Sure you told me you wanted to room here; going to get a job, support yourself. Family's had reverses; all right. You say you like the looks of me; I liked the looks of you and I do right now, Marjorie, never better. You pay your half the room a week while you're not here; that's square. Now you show up, hear I'm going to Sennen's. I say want to come along? You say, who with? I say, two men want to take me; I'll spare you one. I do it. He takes you into town and gives you a good time and you knock him and everybody else but one, who probably

didn't have any pep in him. Now what did Jake do or Sam Troufrie, or whoever they all were, when I wasn't looking?"

"Nothing different from when you were looking," Marjorie rejoined steadily.

"Oh!" said Clara and braided her hair thoughtfully for a minute, gazing away.

"What did they do to you different from what you're used to?" Clara formed her query at last and met Marjorie's eyes squarely; and Marjorie could not answer. So Clara said: "I know. A few from your bunch have had their arms around me. Not tonight; a couple of 'em tried to but all space was under lease. But they have, and sometimes they've sort of drowsed, dancing—forgotten themselves, as it was; I mean forgotten me, Molly, the manicure girl. So they held me in those moments like they would a girl friend of theirs from home—like they would you. Tight enough but nothin' back of it, Marjorie; no bite! I know what you mean. That's what you're here for; to get the snap, ain't it? Honest? Then what're you sore about? Aren't you here to play the real game?"



"What game?"  
 "Oh, my game!" said Clara. "And your game—when you're away from home and mamma and papa; any girl's game who's got a decent looking face and figure that ain't actually repulsive. Do you suppose there's a man born who wouldn't 'get' a good looking girl if he could? You been brought up at home, I understand; Evanston. How many of you happened?"

Marjorie flushed slightly. "Just me," she told. "I never had any brothers or sisters."

"So papa and mamma both had all their time to give to you. Of course that don't make it more simple for you, though I do understand that even your nice little boys have been treatin' you nice home girls some rougher lately. Even the society columns been talkin' about it; and the 'chaperone.' You been checkin' your corsets between leavin' mother and startin' to waltz with Willy. Naughty, naughty! They're all duds when they're out with you and you know it; you go through the motions of playin' with fire and actin' up reckless; but you know those boys ain't actually goin' to do any damage to you. If they were, you'd have begun to suspect it, wearin' that dress, before my friends begun judgin' by appearance tonight. What'd you want me to tell 'em?"

"Nothing," said Marjorie, humbly.

"Kid," cried Clara, with sudden emotion and clasping her roommate's hand, "you're up against something you ain't told to me. That's all right! I don't mean to jump on you; just the opposite, dearie. I've had all the advantages in this game. Nine of us, where I come from—seven grew up, too; or growin'. A few miles over that way," she nodded vaguely west and cityward, as she let go of Marjorie's hand.

"Ever hear of Augusta Street? Oh, sure you have, if you come from Evanston; Northwestern Settlement's on it! Well, the Selitz fam'ly—that's us—used to be just off it; and I don't believe there was a bunch that visitin' ladies used to get more worked up about than us. We had two rooms to live in, the six or seven of us—I forget exactly how many we had around then—when somebody dropped in with the idea that was terrible. Terrible? Why, we'd just moved out of one room that I could remember, all right; and those two were still lookin' mighty wide to me.

"Then they started that talk that a man mustn't beat up his woman. Who'd they want a man to take on when he got soused, a cop? And that sex education stuff! Excuse me, Marjorie, I just got to laugh. I must have been about twelve, I think, when some one slipped me one of those little white books for girls with nice pink apple blossoms on the covers and startin' out with the pollination of flowers.

"I don't know who that woman was or where she come from



Over Mr. Saltro's shoulder Marjorie watched a couple being ejected from the floor. She did not know that her own gown had barely passed Senen's strict censorship.

—she was too innocent even for the settlement, I think now, as I recall it. But I do remember she sort of blushed and whispered to me as though I was to get a sort of shock when I read it; told me to come to her, if there was anything puzzled me. Well, she was right; I never had anything puzzle me like that book—talkin' about flowers and birds and animals for nine-tenths the way through and then workin' up to a whisper of what, if you was a good guesser, you'd see was meant to be girls and men.

"And me—well, where do you suppose I'd have been by that time if I hadn't started 'bout seven years before 'bout eight chapters beyond where that book blushed itself to death?

"Oh, don't worry none about me, dearie! I know more about that stuff—the woman pays—than the one that wrote it. At the same time, when a man does show you a swell time and spend his money, you don't get anywhere by being yourself an absolute dead beat. Sam knows just exactly the distance I step and knows there's just exactly no chance of my stretching it with him.

"You better go to bed now, Marjorie. Say, ain't the paper on this room swell and this carpet and all this"—Clara gestured vaguely but indicatively of the wide, pleasant spaciousness of the room—"just for you and me."

And Clara continued serenely undressing; and in a minute she was in bed. "Never mind 'bout the light," she murmured comfortably. "Whole Commonwealth-Edison Company—couldn't keep—me awake if it was camped on the ceiling." And she was asleep—actually asleep, Marjorie saw, when she crept over by Clara's bed and looked down at her tranquil face.

Marjorie put out the light and opened wide one of the windows. She made no start toward bed but stood near the open window staring down on Clearedge Street while her thought leaped to Mrs. Russell's apartment where, for all she knew or might suppose, her father had returned. It leaped, her thought, to her mother sleeping, undoubtedly as serenely as Clara, in her compartment on the train rushing to New York; it leaped, for less vivid instants of imagination, to Billy; to Gregg; to Rinderfeld; to Mr. Saltro; and then, abandoning its jumping from individual to individual, it set before her a new cosmogony.

What a simple now-I-lay-me-down-to-sleep world she had



JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG

stepped from, she thought, as she reckoned how all her life she had gone to bed, never with anything seriously worrying her or threatening her until a few weeks ago. What a world of romance and childish beliefs had been that which centered about her room around the corner of the hall from mamma's and papa's.

Would she exchange places with that girl she had been? She had told Gregg "no," even before she had left home, and now at the end of her first day as an inhabitant of the building—the number of which Mr. Dantwill had so emphatically leaded over—she cried to herself "no" again.

Here she had come to escape her protected life and the life which all men she had known, from Billy to Rinderfeld—and including even the casual Mr. Dantwill—had wished her to continue to know and to know that alone. Of course, this first excursion from it had hurt her; but already she was liking the sting of her hurts. Certainly she was not going to quit and run back because of them; no, what was unknown and forbidden to her, that she was to explore.

And already she found herself smiling at memory of herself with her best friend, Clara of Evanston, discussing what they had considered difficulties and what for them had formed "realities." She imagined Clara of Augusta and Clearedge Streets overhearing them; and she tried to think what Clara would say.

She went over to look down on Clara Selitz's face in sleep; beautiful it was; a little softer but no less strong and resolute. She had to carry character with her all the time, that girl, Marjorie realized; and she had—till she had achieved what truthfully was a "fine" face. It made insipid Marjorie's image of her friends' faces that she had called "fine." And she knew she had made no mistake in picking from that drug store window, Clara Seeley.

Marjorie embarked upon wholly strange seas of experience with men in their business places when, upon the morning after her visit with Mr. Saltro to Sennen's Hall, she set out to earn her living by the sale, from shop to shop, of Bostrock's Business Boosters. These were advertising specialties of all sorts from small, celluloid elephants bearing an inkwell and a shop's name imprinted, to souvenir card cases, calendars, paper monoplane.

More than a score of knickknacks altogether composed the Bostrock "line" with which Marjorie had become acquainted by answering, in person, one of those advertisements of "Experience not essential to make good money selling proved, popular articles. Call today. Draw your pay tomorrow."

She had called upon Mr. Bostrock while she still was an inhabitant of the big, protected home in Evanston; and though she gave her name as Conway and her address on Clearedge Street, and though she wore her plainest suit and gloves, and shoes which were not new, Bostrock immediately perceived her station.

He was a keen-eyed, quick-talking, snap-judgment little fellow, Herman Bostrock, and not overpolite to the shabby ones in the line ahead of Marjorie who preceded her to the dingy rail of the office and thence on the other side to the seat beside Mr. Bostrock's desk. He did not permit them to sit but passed them on and out, almost instantly, to the dusty flight of stairs down to Wells Street. But when Marjorie's turn came, he not only asked her to sit down but he himself arose—a stubby, short-legged figure with patchy-gray hair, grayish thin cheeks and loose lips stained with chewing tobacco.

"You mean to do business? You want to stick, if you make good? And you're going to try to make good?" Mr. Bostrock demanded of her, almost without break between his words, much less without stop between his questions.

When Marjorie assured him that she meant, wanted and hoped, he clapped his hand down on his desk.

"Done; I take you on."

Evidently he prided himself on his snap judgments and made a point of them, though it was plain that he had not gained greatly in wordly goods by them.

"References, I am sure, are satisfactory," he added, flatteringly. "Nevertheless, to keep our records complete, we must go through the form of asking for them."

"I'm afraid I can't give references," said Marjorie, frankly.

"In that case, when an applicant is otherwise satisfactory, we require a deposit of two dollars to cover cost of samples."

But when Marjorie promptly opened her handbag, he more quickly shook his head. "I dispense with such needless routine in your case. Now, Miss Conway, here is our city territory not yet allocated."

And, giving her a choice of six sections of Chicago and suburbs, she took for her own a long, triangular city territory in which she was to own the sole prerogative of visiting, in the interests of Bostrock's Business Boosters, west side auto dealers, bakers, bankers, barbers, butchers, chiropodists, churches, cleaners, confectioners, delicatessens, dentists, department stores, druggists and so on down Bostrock's alphabet of businesses to undertakers and wigmakers.

She laughed on her way home that day when she pictured herself peddling little celluloid elephants to a Swede delicatessen magnate on Milwaukee Avenue. But she recognized she had a job in which, if she went at it with determination and humor, she could make good.

She was on straight commission, twenty per cent of the gross. She ought to average five dollars a day, she figured; and she liked the idea of active work, in which she could utilize all her energy and have the fun of devising her own schemes for making sales. There was the element of attack and contest about it, too; and, in the territory which was to be hers, practically no chance of encountering Evanston acquaintances.

She tried to start at the actual offering of her wares, on this morning after her expedition with Mr. Saltro, in something of the spirit of sporting, half humorous adventure in which she had carried her samples away from Bostrock's; but when she set out from Clearedge Street it proved an amazingly difficult feeling to summon.

She had breakfast, not in the big, cheerful, quiet dining room of home, but in a hot, noisy, smelly cafeteria. She was tired from last night; and that something which had been her peculiar possession—her conviction of innate superiority—was fled; and that something, which the other girls in the cafeteria possessed—confidence from experience in taking care of ones self—of course could not be hers.

"Remember the American marines!" Clara encouraged her with a friendly grasp when they parted on the corner where Marjorie took a street car. "Treat 'em all rough before they get a chance to rough you."

But Marjorie trembled too visibly to give even a good imitation of treating anybody rough when, after several counsels of



her cowardice, she entered a small bank and began her business career.

She made no sale but received such courteous treatment from a young man whom she approached that she agreed to come back next month when the bank might be wanting something; and she immediately invaded a clothing store down the block; next a milliner's shop; next a restaurant; next a garage.

Men in business were a most mixed lot—Marjorie decided that evening on her way to Clearedge Street; but almost without exception her "prospects" had one common sort of astuteness—they could spot on sight that Miss Conway, representing Bostrock's Business Boosters, was a girl without a home and very recently cast upon her own, and was without experience of the ways of the world. With few exceptions, they were surprisingly considerate of her. They took time from busy hours to give her advice and several asked her to consult them, if she encountered trouble; one, in addition, ordered three dollars' worth of printed blotters.

So Marjorie returned with sixty cents earned—not much less than her lunch money and carfare—and with her opinions about her "prospects" rather unsettled until she talked with Clara.

"Fresh guys!" judged Clara promptly. "That's the kind of stuff they try to rope you in with. You didn't fall for it, did you? . . . Forgot to tell you, kid. Look out for the old ones—especially the gray hairs—worse than the boys. One of your own age—well, sometimes, Marjorie; don't count on it; but sometimes you'll by accident stir up somethin' sportin' in one—but the old boys that go after girls—they ain't got a fair instinct left to 'em. Air! Marjorie, take the air when they're around. Say, now, where'll we step this eve?"

For Clara required to be always going somewhere; the population of the neighborhood demanded entertainment or excitation of some sort with a unanimity and persistency amazing to Marjorie Hale whom Evanston had considered a good deal of a goer.

But, taken together, all the different social sets of Evanston, with which Marjorie Hale had become acquainted in ten years, did not on any night offer her the option in entertainment which lay before Clara Seeley every night in the dance halls, gardens, hotels, rinks, chop suey restaurants, movie theaters and the myriad other places of public entertainment in Chicago.

Marjorie Hale, with some of her friends had descended from Evanston for various forays into the Green Mill, the Marigold Garden and the Pantheon. But these visits had been excursions apart, and they held no place in the regular order of social activities advancing you from the association of families of less importance and prominence toward the ranks of the leaders. But here, with Clara, the places of public amusement created her world.

With no need of sanction from anybody and with requirement of nothing more than a moderately decent dress and—usually—a male companion, a girl could go almost anywhere and have a wonderful time. And with nothing to bother your mind as to whether attendance at this entertainment or at that would advance you most, socially; for you weren't trying to advance anywhere. Where you were, you had arrived; and all you had to worry about was another new dress—when your present dancing gown no longer remained decent—and, usually, your male companion.

This to Marjorie became the most amazing and puzzling revelation—that Clara and her friends were satisfied not to be on their way to anything.

"You mean don't I want more coin?" Clara inquired when Marjorie tried to discuss it.

"Sure, I'd like more; but you don't need to worry over my makin' any mistakes about what a girl can get away with, gettin' it."

"No; I don't mean just money," Marjorie tried to explain. "Don't you want to get out of this way of living some day, Clara?"

"Into what?" demanded Clara, practically.

"Some place of your own where—" Marjorie continued vaguely and Clara caught her up with sudden, surprising softness.

"I know; where you have kids. Sure I want that; ever see a girl, who's any good, wouldn't like one? But what do you do to a kid, if you get 'em without marryin'; and what do you get yourself into if you do?"

"Do what?" asked Marjorie.

"Marry. The set-up on the other side of the sketch's got to be a man, hasn't he? A bird down at the Sunday Evening Club—I stepped in there once—said a mouthful about marriage. Said if marriage meant anything it meant trust. Can you imagine me trustin' a man—one man—any man, after what I've

seen? You seemed to been glimpsin' some unposed pictures of Mr. Man, yourself, recently; what'd you think 'bout what you been seein' of the so-called human race?"

Marjorie did not tell, for she could not yet take her bitter thoughts lightly, like Clara, in these days when the vestiges of the privileges and the protection which had been hers in the big home in Evanston were vanishing, and her struggles were beginning to mark Marjorie Conway; and when men, with eyes eager for such signs, were subtly or more openly watching the progress of discouragement of this gently reared girl who had been cast upon herself.

Nothing overt happened, but, in her rounds of business, tiny, almost indescribable things were done to try her; sometimes questions asked, proper in words, with a tone just off; sometimes a hand unnecessarily brushing hers or put over hers in the process of taking a sample from her fingers; often only the ogle of sensuous eyes.

When she began to notice that the men who never subjected her to this were the poorer and "lower class" of the prospects she approached, and when she commented on this hopefully to Clara, she promptly was supplied with a reason:

"They ain't got the nerve; they see you ain't sunk to them yet. Watch 'em when a girl below 'em gets around. Dearie, don't buy yourself any bunk 'bout the superior virtues of the poor; I'm from 'em."

Of course, many men who considered themselves the equal or the superior of the agent for Bostrock's Business Boosters invariably met her either with impersonal indifference or with courteous consideration when she solicited orders from them; and then she would remember that her father invariably had seemed to her wholly impersonal or kindly considerate to girls in business—until she found out about Sybil Russell.

How and where did her father and Mrs. Russell meet, she wondered; in his office? At a dance hall or cabaret? When at home she speculated about this, it had seemed to her an item of mere curiosity but now it had become almost a fundamental question; and she needed to know, about Mrs. Russell, much more. Gregg was right about that, she came to admit to herself; and she came to increasing and increasing desire to see Gregg and talk over everything with him, though she continued wholly to lack any longing for Billy.

She supposed this partly was due to her dread of the frightful emotional storm to which she was sure to be subjected when he found her; but partly, also, it was because she realized that, after it, she would be only worse off in mind and soul than before.

And sometimes this struck her as particularly strange because she thought she naturally would want, as offset to her present experiences, the companionship of a man who, though all the rest of the men in the world were polluted, would keep himself clean. She found plenty of comfort in this certainty of his character; many and many a time when with men, or when listening to Clara's calm notations on life, Marjorie thought: "That may be true; but there's Billy. And if I know one like him there must be lots and lots of others." But she never mentioned him to Clara; what was the use?

She did guardedly mention Gregg; and Rinderfeld; and even her father, but without letting Clara suspect—she thought—that, in her pre-Clearedge Street days, she had been more than an acquaintance of Charles Hale, who was much in the newspapers now.

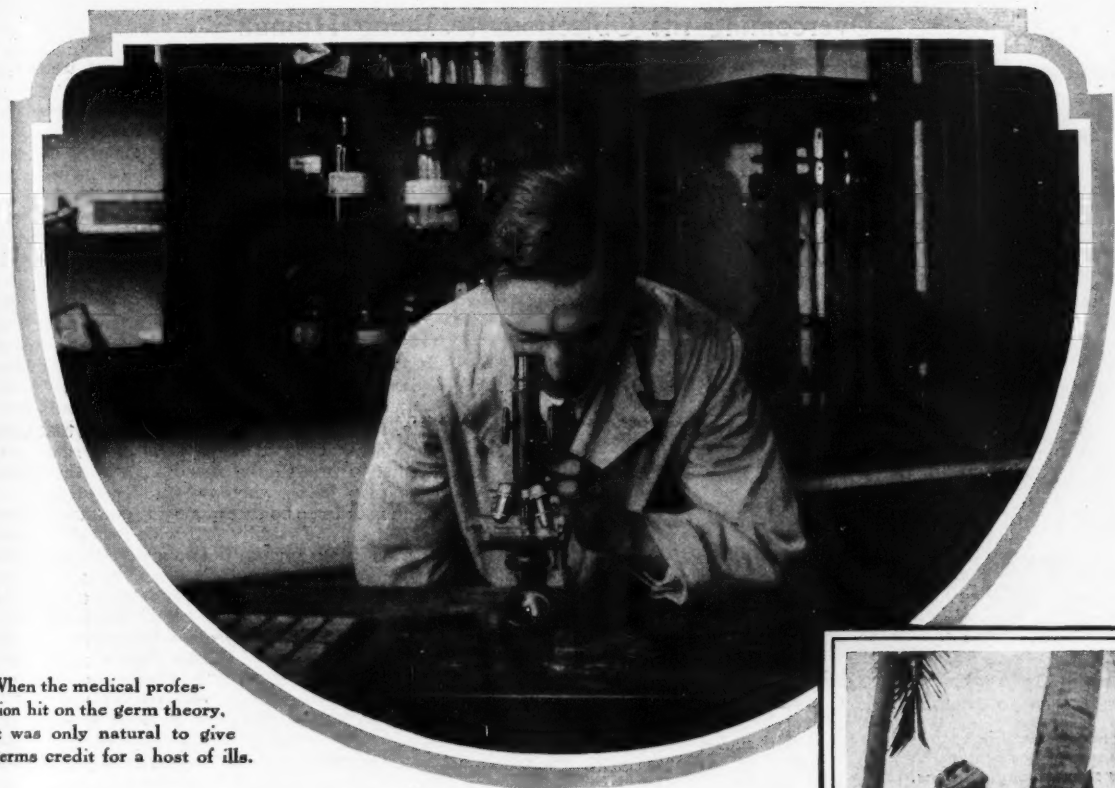
For the new president of Tri-State Products was doing big and spectacular things. He bought out a competitor whose mills had been shut down for six months, and restarted with full force working full time.

Marjorie missed being "in" at that triumph; she knew just how he had worked it, or would have worked it, if the home in Evanston had remained as it was; for she with her mother, or alone, had been hostess of many big business parties. She wondered what he was saying about her mother and about her.

The only comment which she had seen in the papers was that she had sailed, with her mother, on the *Aquilania*. And of course she wondered most what he was thinking and feeling about her mother and about herself—and about Mrs. Russell.

He, of course, was capable neither of thinking nor feeling constantly the same toward any one of them. For he was going through an upheaval, less consciously self-inflicted perhaps, but not, for that, less violent than Marjorie's; and his resultants confounded him far more than her discoveries confused her. For he had considered that he had taken thought and reckoned on the worst which could come, when he first took up his life with Sybil Russell. And he had convinced himself that, even if the worst came, he would be chief sufferer and (Continued on page 140)





When the medical profession hit on the germ theory, it was only natural to give germs credit for a host of ills.

*FRED C. KELLY is one writer who is not afraid to add two and two together and get five—if he thinks five is the proper answer. You may think he has a correct answer in this article, or you may think he is a mile from truth; but one thing is sure, you will be interested in his views.*

## Overcoming the Objections to Being Human

CONSIDERING the proposition as a whole, I am inclined to feel that it is perhaps more desirable to be human than to be any other kind of animal. The human opportunities for intellectual satisfaction probably overbalance our many conspicuous physical shortcomings.

Except for our intellectual side, surely almost anybody would rather be a lion or an elephant than a man. If we couldn't read, or talk, or go to movies, or build, or plan, or do anything that requires a human mind, many of the more able-bodied quadrupeds would have the laugh on us.

The lion can count on a life at least as long as ours, and he lives his in the open air, free from housing problems or landlords. His dangers from other animals or attack of any kind are far less than ours from careless drivers of automobiles. And when it comes to disease, the lion is in an incomparably better situation. He not only has fewer ills, but he is beyond the reach of society surgeons or daily health hints. With regard to play and physical sport, the lion has the advantage of greater strength, more leisure, and fewer hampering restrictions of convention.

The lion's body, like those of most other quadrupeds, is well adapted to the kind of life it leads. Our human bodies, on the other hand, were never intended for the conditions of modern civilized environment. And right there lies the great physical disadvantage of being human. Lower animals, being less remote than we are from the kind of life they led in the beginning, have the

great blessing of a physical equipment suitably designed for their needs. Not so much can be said for us humans. Compared with what might have been done, if modern requirements had been contemplated, the human body is a good deal of a botch.

Take a look at your feet. Note how the inner-side of each foot is hollowed out to fit around the trunk of a tree—indicating that the human foot originally was designed less for walking than for climbing. The strain of walking is not evenly distributed; most of the burden rests on the outer side. Consequently fallen arches are a common complaint, and nearly everybody obliged to spend much time standing is troubled with tired feet.

The human foot is merely a crude makeshift that gradually has been adapting itself to modern needs. It is not so well designed or well balanced as the foot of a horse or a cow; this is not surprising, for it was never intended that a horse or cow should use its feet in climbing. If there were no hard-surfaced streets to make



The human foot was originally designed for climbing rather than walking.

## Overcoming the Objections to Being Human



Compulsory inoculation against typhoid in the Army and Navy has resulted in a death rate only slightly lower than among civilians.

a horse require shoes, its foot would be all it could desire. We could not work much improvement on it, even if we were planning a horse's foot right now. But if there were no human feet, and an expert were asked to design one, surely he would not get up anything so inferior as those now in general use.

Our pelvic structure, too, is not as substantial as it might have been if we had been planned originally to walk upright instead of to proceed on all fours. The most vital parts of our anatomy are the ones most exposed to accident, whereas those of a four-legged animal are more out of harm's way. We have large back teeth that we never need, and dentists frighten us with stories of possible abscesses under them that ought to be detected by sitting for X-ray photographs. The valves in our veins at many points are not adequate for our upright posture, having been intended for our original four-legged design; consequently we have varicose veins, hemorrhoids, and other annoyances.

Yet, in spite of these physical handicaps, we get along reasonably well—because of our ability to adjust ourselves to ever changing conditions and to overcome the handicap of being human. Poor as our feet are, their possibilities have gradually improved, as a matter of evolutionary process, until the average man today can walk as far as ordinary occasion requires.

No matter what kind of life we lead, the human family seems to have, to a surprising degree, this power of adjustment. We can endure life in ill-ventilated apartment houses, in coal mines, or even in trenches, filled with an enemy's poison gas, and not suffer as much as might be expected. As our

mode of life gives us less and less opportunity for exercise, we nevertheless continue to adjust ourselves, with the result that our average state of health, instead of being on the decline, really is getting better.

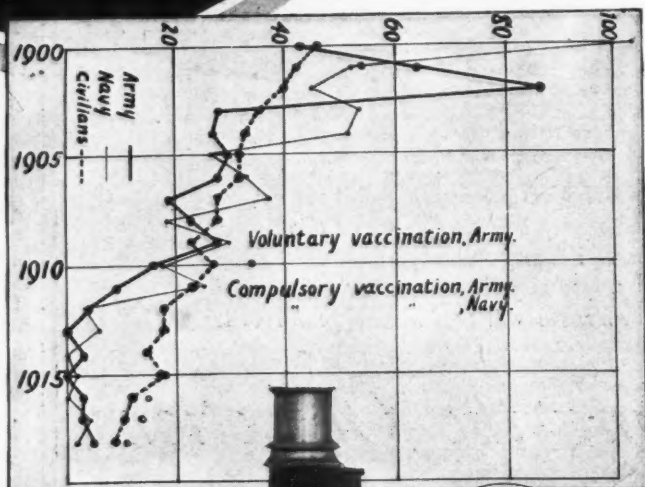
The bulk of the population in the big cities today spends a surprisingly scant amount of time out of doors. Men leave home early in the morning, ride to their offices, eat lunch in the basement of the same building, and return home, again riding, in the evening. And yet they live.

A hundred years ago, before we were more adjusted to this mode of life, the ill effects would have been much greater. Perhaps when our forbears first quit living in trees and confined themselves to walking on solid ground, the health cranks of those remote days pointed out the danger of general decadence unless the race got more exercise, and admonished the people to take time evenings and Saturday afternoons to climb trees in order to avoid dyspepsia. By the way, what ever became of that disease? We haven't heard much of it in the last twenty years. It must have passed out with the old American plan hotel, where we ate everything on the menu in order to be sure of getting our money's worth.

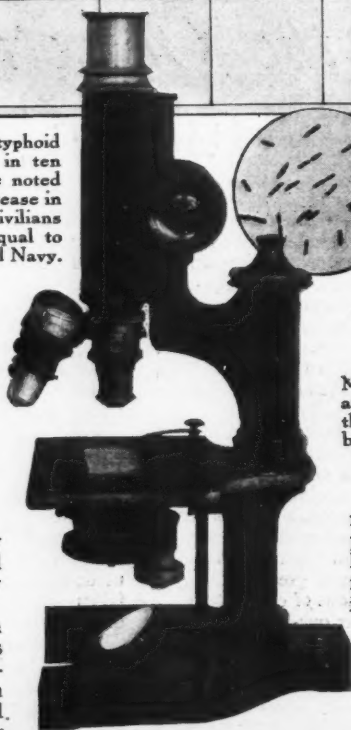
Not only physically, but with regard to diseases, and even in our mental outlook, we are constantly in this same process of adjustment. It is well known that when savages catch measles, or any one of several diseases which are not ordinarily fatal to a civilized race, the mortality is appalling—because they have never had

the disease and have not had occasion to develop resistance to it.

Now this evolutionary process of adjustment, while tremendously powerful, is not a thing that is conspicuous. You can't stand off to one side and actually see it working. Hence it seems probable that frequently we have let ourselves be grossly misled into erroneous conclusions regarding various items of cause and effect. We doubtless have given credit to many comparatively inconsequential causes which rightly belonged to Mother Nature.



This chart shows typhoid deaths per 100,000 in ten States. It is to be noted that the gradual decrease in the death rate for civilians has been almost equal to that for the Army and Navy.



Many doctors seem to attribute more power to these microscopic little bugs than to the Almighty.

Consider, for example, the work of the medical profession. Isn't it more than possible that physicians and surgeons have long been disposed to take too much credit for whatever improvement has been shown in the physical welfare of the human race?

Many diseases are less formidable than they once were, and as the so-called pill doctors are the most numerous group engaged in trying to combat disease, they not illogically declare "We did it!"

But I have recently seen some startling figures which seem to show that any headway we have made against disease may be due in a large measure to a great fundamental reason which has nothing to do with doctors.

In what follows it must be understood that my rôle is simply that of reporter presenting observations within the reach of anyone. There is no intent to minimize the unquestioned sincerity or heroism of doctors. Indeed, to paraphrase a familiar saying, some of my best friends are doctors.

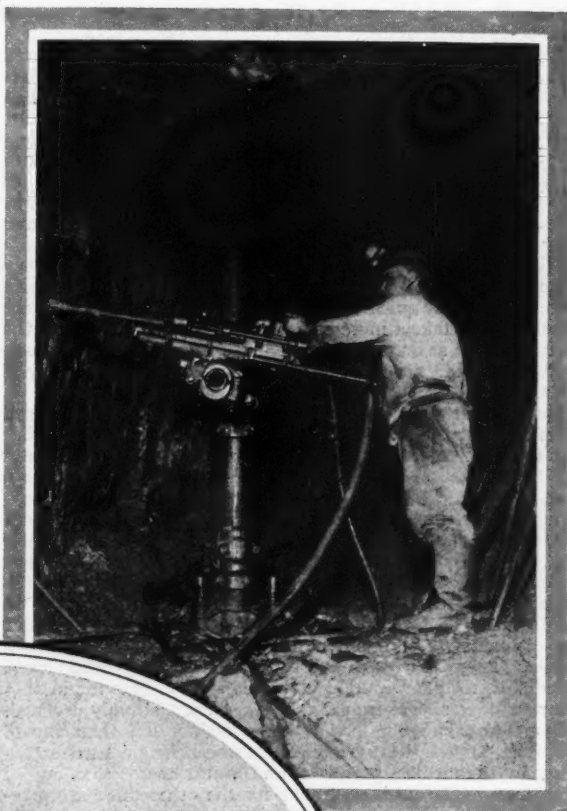
A majority of people have a belief in the capability of the family physician, and in physicians generally, that is well nigh equal to their belief in their accepted brands of religion. Why? Because they have sifted the evidence and determined that the doctor's work is effective? Isn't it rather because they were taught to believe in doctors even before they left the cradle, and have followed them blindly ever since? Long belief in a given proposition, while not easily uprooted, does not, of course, really prove anything. People for years accepted without question the idea that the world was flat. And even within my own recollection it was an offense both rare and heinous not to believe that there was a hell of actual fire and brimstone. Today I do not know a single intelligent individual who takes his hell quite that literally. Yet if the brimstone hell once existed it doubtless does still.

So it is with doctors. If the medicine they gave us years ago was a good thing to take, we ought to continue taking it. But today the best physicians are those who give the least medicine.

On the morning that I started to write this, I read a health article in a Washington newspaper in which a (presumably) eminent physician advised against the taking of drugs or chemicals in stomach or bowel ailments. If drugs should not be taken

into the stomach, for stomach trouble, in heaven's name when should they be taken? How often do you hear a friend speak enthusiastically of his favorite doctor: "Oh, he's a perfect wonder! So sensible and practical. You know he gives almost no medicine!" That has come to be the highest form of praise.

Any intelligent doctor is willing to admit that the use of medicine in treating ills is on the wane. He admits, too, that many of the medicines given to us years ago did no good, and in many instances did actual harm. Hence, it must be obvious if doctors were right years ago, they are wrong today. And if they are right now, they



The human body has a surprisingly great power to readjust itself to the life we lead—whether it be in ill-ventilated apartments, coal mines, or the great out of doors.



were wrong then. Either they gave too much medicine then or they are giving too little now.

Even aside from the medicine itself, the methods once in use have largely been proved wrong.

Doctors used to starve fever patients, refusing even their appeals for water, and they kept tubercular sufferers in rooms almost airtight—never suspecting that fresh air was the thing most needed. Various other forms of treatment now regarded as ridiculous, but once an accepted part of medical practice, might be cited. In other words, the methods of the medical profession, considered over a period of years, have not been dependable. Yet, notwithstanding the mistakes of doctors, the race has continued to improve—thanks to the processes of evolution and adjustment.

But, you say, let's not rob doctors of the credit that is theirs. Think of all the people doctors have cured! There again we run into the item of blind faith. Have they ever really cured anybody of anything? What I am getting at is this: Have we not often been misled by coincidence? A man is ill and sends for a doctor. The man gets well. Hence, the doctor must have the credit. Inasmuch as many methods of physicians are later admitted to have been wrong, why not say that the man got well in spite of the doctor? We are inclined to forget that curable diseases usually get well of themselves. Nature cures them. Good health is our normal



We go to surgeons because the means in common use for maintaining health have failed.



## Overcoming the Objections to Being Human

state. Disease is abnormal. The most that a doctor can do is to cooperate with nature.

Take, for example, whooping cough. Children have been suffering from whooping cough for many generations. Doctors are called and many of them still administer medicine. But most doctors today are frank to admit that they can be of scant aid in combating whooping cough. The cough is likely to hang on for several weeks, and doctors, notwithstanding the years of opportunity they have had to learn some effective plan for treating this childish ill, can do nothing. Just think that over. It is a doctor's business to cure children of whooping cough and they have not the remotest idea how to do it! Serums are fashionable just now and there may have been comparatively quick recoveries of children when serum was tried, but there have been equally quick recoveries where there was no treatment at all. Or, to take a more conspicuous illustration, what of the disease known as an ordinary cold? Has any doctor ever actually cured a cold? Doesn't a cold disappear just as rapidly if let alone?

But doctors point with pride to the greatly decreased death rates in various diseases, and declare that this indicates what has been accomplished by health officers, sanitary boards, and the whole medical profession. In this connection let's take a look at the results of an investigation conducted by Dr. Raymond Pearl of the Department of Vital Statistics at Johns Hopkins University. In his recently delivered Lowell Lectures, Dr. Pearl exhibited charts showing the death rates per one hundred thousand, for various diseases, for both sexes, in the so-called registration area of the United States, from 1900 to 1918. First he showed the decreasing death rates from four causes against which public health agencies have been especially active. These four were (1) tuberculosis, (2) typhoid fever, (3) diphtheria and croup, and (4) dysentery. He found that the rate for each of these diseases had, indeed, steadily declined. Tuberculosis, however, had declined slightly less than any of the other three. Yet tuberculosis has been fought harder, perhaps, by the medical profession and health boards than any of the others. The rates of decline for the other three are practically identical.

Dr. Pearl exhibited another diagram showing the decrease in the death rate for four other diseases upon which no attempt at control has been made. These were (1) paralysis with specified cause, (2) purulent infection and septicæmia, or in other words, blood poisoning, (3) softening of the brain, and (4) tumors. It is obvious that public health and sanitation can have had little to do with these four. A man does not ordinarily have much warning of paralysis or blood poisoning, and nothing in particular is done for an individual or for the community to prevent such ills. Few doctors claim to have done anything to forestall tumors or paralysis.

Even if we admit that such maladies can be treated after they are once in evidence, we are at least safe in saying that there is no definite method of preventing them. Yet the rate of these last four, also, has been declining. True, they are less important as causes of death than the other four mentioned, but that has nothing to do with the point we are now making, for we are discussing the trend of death rates rather than relative causes.

Now for the astonishing fact. The rate of decrease for the *uncontrolled* four diseases actually was *greater* than for the four that doctors have been fighting most vigorously, and to which they point with pride as evidence of what their profession has been able to accomplish. The difference in the rate of decrease, it must be admitted, was not great. In a general way we might say that the decline from all eight causes of death was about the same.

When the medical profession hit on the germ theory, it naturally went to extremes, and decided that nearly everything was due to germs, and that the only sure way to prevent a given disease was to keep away from the germ. The truth is that, while this theory still is largely accepted, there are many able doctors prepared to offer an astounding array of facts to prove that the whole thing is a hoax—that germs are friends rather than enemies of the human race. To present these facts would require the space of a separate article. At any rate, whether a disease is caused by germs, or through some other means of communication, many eminent biologists and students of vital statistics, among them Dr. Pearl, are of the opinion that the item of infection is, at the most, only one factor having to do with contracting a disease.

Another important factor is heredity. There is much evidence to show that we inherit the ability to resist disease or the liability to it—according to our ancestry, as we inherit the color

of our hair or eyes. People differ in what may be termed their biologic fitness, and vary in their ability to resist ills of one kind or another.

A striking example of this was shown during the influenza epidemic of 1918. Dr. Pearl, in a series of papers published by the United States Public Health Service, has shown that the epidemic, while universal in its distribution among the larger cities, yet showed a big difference in the amount of havoc wrought. This difference in destructiveness had nothing whatever to do with the efforts of health boards to check the influenza. Such restrictive measures as the prevention of public gatherings, and the obviously nonsensical wearing of masks, made no difference one way or the other. Likewise, an analysis of the geographical location of cities, the age constitution of the population, density of population, rapidity of growth, in recent years—all these bore no relation with the extent, large or small, of the epidemic.

It was found, however, that there existed a marked correlation between the death rate from influenza and the normal death rate from all causes. Further investigation showed that there was a definite relation between influenza and three other great causes—tuberculosis, organic diseases of the heart, and Bright's disease—ills due to the breakdown of the tissues of the lungs, heart, or kidneys. On the other hand, there was only a slight relationship between a number of infectious diseases, such as pneumonia, typhoid fever, and influenza. A town might have lots of typhoid and yet scarcely any influenza. In a nutshell, then, the matter appeared to be one of hereditary rather than environmental conditions. Certain classes of people can resist influenza better than others. A population subject in the nature of things to heart, lung or kidney trouble was most subject to influenza. Other populations were less easily attacked—according to their stage of evolutionary development. Health boards in cities of the latter sort were naturally inclined to take the credit. It seems to me that they might just as logically have taken the credit for preventing cyclones or earthquakes.

Typhoid fever itself, while regarded as a germ disease, is evidently one toward which we are gradually developing resistance. Some years ago it was found that the water supply in the District of Columbia was not as pure as it might be, and a large filtration plant was placed in operation. Yet this made no marked difference in the number of typhoid cases. The rate of decrease continued about as usual. There had been a gradual diminishing of typhoid in the District of Columbia for many years previous, and only a year or two prior to the opening of the filtration plant, there had been a marked drop in the mortality rate. If this drop had occurred just a little later, everybody would have accepted, naturally enough, the explanation that a better water supply was the answer, whereas the truth is that having pure water was evidently only one of the factors in the situation.

In the chart on page 74, showing typhoid figures for the Army, and Navy and civilian life, in various cities, it is to be noted that in the long run the gradual drop in the death rate for the civilian population has been almost equal to that for either the Army or the Navy, and that, at the end, the two curves are not far apart. Yet we are told that most of the decrease in typhoid in the Army and Navy has been due to inoculation. Note also on the chart that while there have been sudden drops in connection with compulsory vaccination, there have been equally sudden drops in the death rate when no such revolutionary method had been used. The lines for all three classes of population have a tendency to run in the same general direction, even though the members of the Army and Navy lead a more regular life than many civilians and have been "handpicked" in the first place because of their excellent physical condition.

Does all this mean that sanitary measures such as pure water are foolish or unnecessary? *Emphatically, no!* But it should be understood that while pure water and good sanitation are of great importance, these are not the only things that affect our well being. We should have sanitary measures even if for no other reason than as a matter of common decency. Certainly it is not proper to pollute one's surroundings in any way, and any form of cleanliness is so desirable that it is worth battling for. No argument is necessary to prove that we should not pollute streams or throw filth broadcast. But we may feel optimistic over the fact that if we should come in contact with undesirable germs, each year we become a little more able to resist them. Each generation inherits a little more ability to be helped by any wise methods of health boards, but part of the success of any method, understand, depends on how far we have advanced in acquiring this resistance.

We hear much talk by doctors of severe (Continued on page 104)

# JEEVES the BLIGHTER

*"I couldn't carry on a day without Jeeves," Bertie declared—the artless Bertie, whose foibles all America is coming to love.*

*"After we're married," said Honoria, "you will have to, that's all. I don't like him."*

*But she did not count on the resources of Jeeves.*

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrations by  
T. D. Skidmore

"You run along, dear," said Aunt Agatha to Honoria. "I have something very serious to say to Bertie."

THE blow fell at precisely one forty-five (summer time). Spenser, my aunt Agatha's butler, was offering me the fried potatoes at the moment, and such was my emotion that I lofted six of them on to the sideboard with the spoon. Shaken to the core, if you know what I mean.

I've told you how I got engaged to Honoria Glossop in my efforts to do young Bingo Little a good turn. Well, on this particular morning she had lugged me round to Aunt Agatha's for lunch, and I was just saying "Death, where is thy jolly old sting?" when I realized that the worst was yet to come.

"Bertie," she said suddenly, as if she had just remembered it, "what is the name of that man of yours—your valet?"

"Eh? Oh, Jeeves!"

"I think he's a bad influence for you," said Honoria. "When we are married, you must get rid of Jeeves."

It was at this point that I jerked the spoon and sent six of the best and crispest sailing on to the sideboard, with Spenser gamboling after them like a dignified old retriever.

"Get rid of Jeeves!" I gasped.

"Yes. I don't like him."

"I don't like him," said Aunt Agatha.

"But I can't . . . I mean . . . Why, I couldn't carry on for a day without Jeeves."

"You will have to," said Honoria. "I don't like him at all."

"I don't like him at all," said Aunt Agatha. "I never did."

Ghastly, what? I'd always had an idea that marriage was a bit of a washout, but I'd never dreamed that it demanded such

frightful sacrifices from a fellow. I passed the rest of the meal in a sort of stupor.

The scheme had been, if I remember, that after lunch I should go off and caddy for Honoria on a shopping tour down Regent Street, but when she got up and started collecting me and the rest of her things, Aunt Agatha stopped her.

"You run along, dear," she said. "I want to say a few words to Bertie."

So Honoria legged it, and Aunt Agatha drew up her chair and started in.

"Bertie," she said, "dear Honoria does not know it, but a little difficulty has arisen about your marriage."

"By Jove, not really?" I said, hope starting to dawn.

"Oh, it's nothing at all, of course! It is only a little exasperating. The fact is, Sir Roderick is being rather troublesome."

"Thinks I'm not a good bet? Wants to scratch the fixture? Well, perhaps he's right."

"Pray do not be so absurd, Bertie. It is nothing so serious as that. But the nature of Sir Roderick's profession unfortunately makes him . . . overcautious."

I didn't get it.

"Overcautious?"

"Yes. I suppose it is inevitable. A nerve specialist with his extensive practice can hardly help taking a rather warped view of humanity."

I got what she was driving at now. Sir Roderick Glossop, Honoria's father, is always called a nerve specialist, because it sounds better, but everybody knows that he's really a sort of janitor to the loony-bin. I mean to say, when your uncle the Duke begins to feel the strain a bit and you find him in the blue drawing room sticking straws in his hair, old Glossop is the



first person you send for. He toddles round, gives the patient the once-over, talks about overexcited nervous systems, and recommends complete rest and seclusion and all that sort of thing. Practically every push family in the country has called him in at one time or another, and I suppose that being in that position, I mean constantly having to sit on people's heads while their nearest and dearest 'phone to the asylum to send round the wagon, does tend to make a chappie take what you might call a warped view of humanity.

"You mean he thinks I may be a loony and he doesn't want a loony son-in-law?" I said.

Aunt Agatha seemed rather peeved than otherwise at my ready intelligence.

"Of course he does not think anything so ridiculous. I told you he was simply exceedingly cautious. He wants to satisfy himself that you are perfectly normal." Here she paused, for Spenser had come in with the coffee. When he had gone, she went on. "He appears to have got hold of some extraordinary story about your having pushed his son Oswald into the lake at Ditteredge Hall. Incredible, of course. Even you would hardly do a thing like that."

"Well, I did sort of lean against him, you know, and he shot off the bridge."

"Oswald definitely accuses you of having pushed him into the water. That has disturbed Sir Roderick, and unfortunately it has caused him to make inquiries and he has heard about your poor uncle Henry."

She eyed me with a good deal of solemnity, and I took a grave sip of coffee. We were peeping into the family cupboard and having a look at the good old skeleton. My late uncle Henry, you see, was by way of being the blot on the Wooster escutcheon. An extremely decent chappie personally and one who had always endeared himself to me by tipping me with considerable lavishness when I was at school. But there's no doubt he did at times do rather rummy things—notably keeping eleven pet rabbits in his bedroom—and I suppose a purist might have considered him more or less off his onion. In fact, to be perfectly frank, he wound up his career, happy to the last and completely surrounded by rabbits, in some sort of a home.

"It is very absurd, of course," continued Aunt Agatha. "If any of the family had inherited poor Henry's eccentricity—and it was nothing more—it would have been Claude and Eustace, and there could not be two brighter boys."

Claude and Eustace were twins and had been kids at school with me in my last summer term. Casting my mind back, it seemed to me that bright just about described them. The whole of that term, as I remembered it, had been spent in getting them out of a series of frightful rows.

"Look how well they are doing at Oxford! Your aunt Emily had a letter from Claude only the other day saying that they hoped to be elected shortly to a very important college club called The Seekers."

"Seekers?" I couldn't recall any club of the name in my time at Oxford. "What do they seek?"

"Claude did not say. Truth or knowledge, I should imagine. It is evidently a very desirable club to belong to, for Claude added that Lord Rainsby, the Earl of Datchet's son, was one of his fellow candidates. However, we are wandering from the point, which is that Sir Roderick wants to have a quiet talk with you quite alone. Now I rely on you, Bertie, to be—I won't say intelligent, but at least sensible. Don't giggle nervously; try to keep that horrible glassy expression out of your eyes; don't yawn or fidget; and remember that Sir Roderick is the president of the West London branch of the antigambling league, so please do not talk about horse racing. He will lunch with you at your flat tomorrow at one-thirty. Please remember that he drinks no wine, strongly disapproves of smoking, and can only eat the simplest food owing to an impaired digestion."

"I should think a dog biscuit and a glass of water would about meet the case, what?"

"Bertie!"

"Oh, all right! Merely persiflage."

"Now it is precisely that sort of idiotic remark that would be calculated to arouse Sir Roderick's worst suspicions. Do please try to refrain from any misguided flippancy when you are with him. He is a very serious-minded man . . . Are you going? Well, please remember all I have said. I rely on you, and, if anything goes wrong, I shall never forgive you."

"Right ho!" I said.

And so home, with a jolly day to look forward to.

I breakfasted pretty late next morning and went for a stroll afterwards. It seemed to me that anything I could do to clear

the old lemon ought to be done, and a bit of fresh air generally relieves that rather foggy feeling that comes over a fellow early in the day. I had taken a stroll in the Park, and got back as far as Hyde Park Corner, when some blighter sloshed me between the shoulder blades. It was young Eustace, my cousin. He was arm in arm with two other fellows, the one on the outside being my cousin Claude and the one in the middle a pink-faced chappie with light hair and an apologetic sort of look.

"Bertie, old egg!" said young Eustace affably.

"Hullo!" I said, not frightfully chirpily.

"Fancy running into you, the one man in London who can support us in the style we are accustomed to! By the way, you've never met old Dog-Face, have you? Dog-Face, this is my cousin Bertie. Lord Rainsby . . . Mr. Wooster. We've just been round to your flat, Bertie. Bitterly disappointed that you were out, but were hospitably entertained by old Jeeves. That man's a corker, Bertie. Stick to him."

"What are you doing in London?" I asked.

"Oh, buzzing around! We're just up for the day. Flying visit, strictly unofficial. We oil back on the three-ten. And now, touching that lunch you very decently volunteered to stand us, which shall it be? Ritz? Savoy? Carlton? Or, if you're a member of Ciro's or the Embassy, that would do just as well."

"I can't give you lunch. I've got an engagement myself. And, by Jove," I said, taking a look at my watch, "I'm late!" I hailed a taxi. "Sorry."

"As man to man, then," said Eustace, "lend us a fiver."

I hadn't time to stop and argue. I unbelted the fiver and hopped into the cab. It was twenty to two when I got to the flat. I bounded into the sitting room, but it was empty.

Jeeves shimmered in.

"Sir Roderick has not yet arrived, sir."

"Good egg!" I said. "I thought I should find him smashing up the furniture." My experience is that the less you want a fellow, the more punctual he's bound to be, and I had had a vision of the old lad pacing the rug in my sitting room, saying "He cometh not!" and generally hotting up. "Is everything in order?"

"I fancy you will find the arrangements quite satisfactory, sir."

"What are you giving us?"

"Cold consommé, a cutlet, and a savory, sir. With lemon squash, iced."

"Well, I don't see how that can hurt him. Don't go getting carried away by the excitement of the thing. And don't let your eyes get glassy, because if you do you're apt to find yourself in a padded cell before you know where you are."

"Very good, sir."

There was a ring at the bell.

"Stand by, Jeeves," I said. "We're off!"

I had met Sir Roderick Glossop before, of course, but only when I was with Honoria; and there is something about Honoria which makes almost anybody you meet in the same room seem sort of undersized and trivial by comparison. I had never realized till this moment what an extraordinarily formidable old bird he was. He had a pair of shaggy eyebrows which gave his eyes a piercing look which was not at all the sort of thing a fellow wanted to encounter on an empty stomach. He was fairly tall and fairly broad, and he had the most enormous head, with practically no hair on it, which made it seem bigger and much more like the dome of St. Paul's. I suppose he must have taken about a nine or something in hats. Shows what a rotten thing it is to let your brain develop too much.

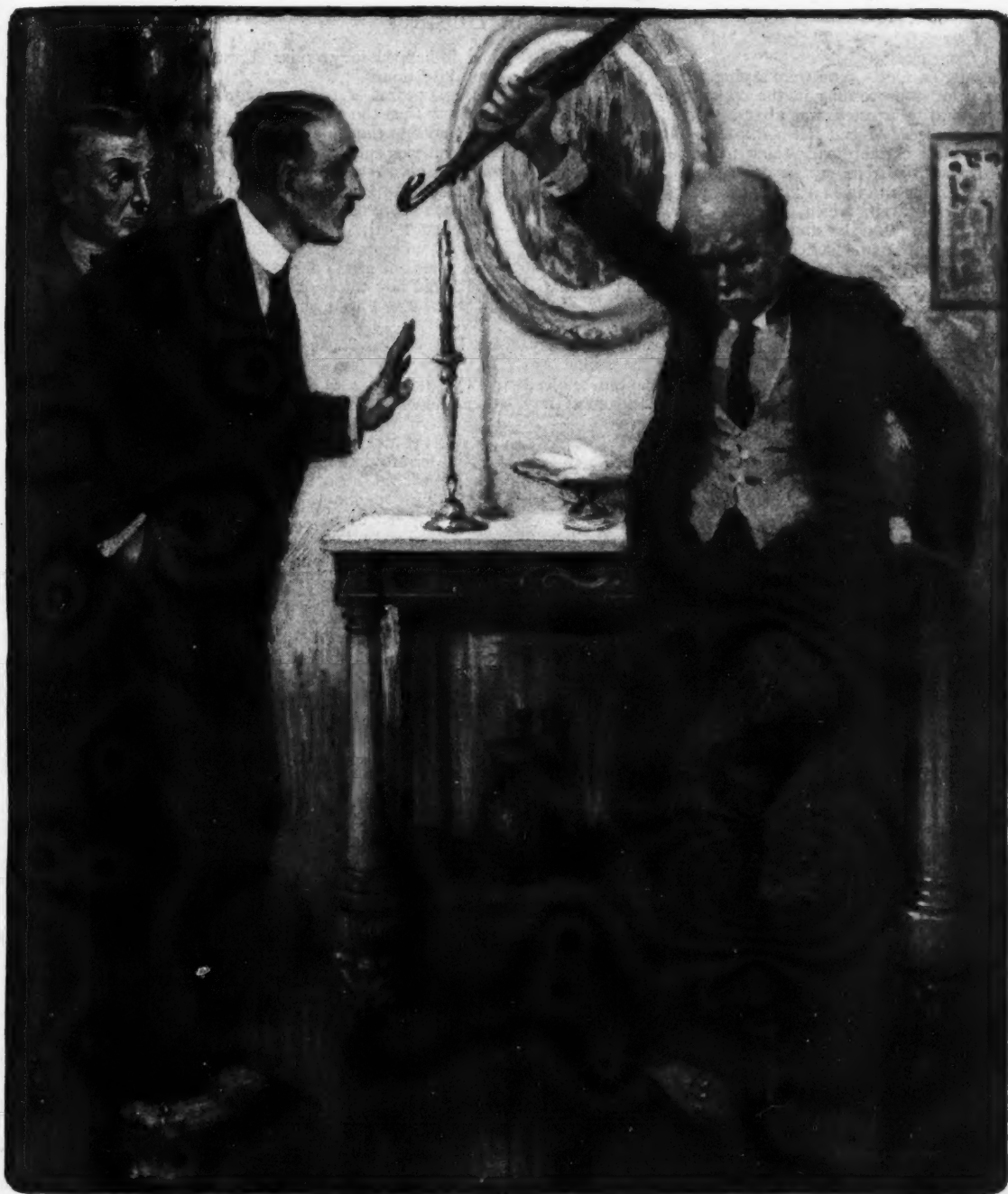
"What ho! What ho! What ho!" I said, trying to strike the genial note, and then had a sudden feeling that that was just the sort of thing I had been warned not to say. Dashed difficult it is to start things going properly on an occasion like this. A fellow living in a London flat is so handicapped. I mean to say, if I had been the young squire greeting the visitor in the country, I could have said "Welcome to Meadowsweet Hall!" or something zippy like that. It sounds silly to say "Welcome to Number 6-A Crichton Mansions, Berkeley Street, W."

"I am afraid I am a little late," he said as we sat down. "I was detained at my club by Lord Alastair Hungerford, the Duke of Ramfurline's son. His Grace, he informed me, had exhibited a renewal of the symptoms which have been causing the family so much concern. I could not leave him immediately. Hence my unpunctuality, which I trust has not discommoded you."

"Oh, not at all! So the Duke is off his rocker, what?"

"The expression which you use is not precisely the one I should have employed myself with reference to the head of





"Stand back!" Sir Roderick shouted as he grabbed an umbrella from the rack.

perhaps the noblest family in England, but there is no doubt that cerebral excitement does, as you suggest, exist in no small degree." He sighed as well as he could with his mouth full of cutlet. "A profession like mine is a great strain, a great strain."

"Must be."

"Sometimes I am appalled at what I see around me." He stopped suddenly and sort of stiffened. "Do you keep a cat, Mr. Wooster?"

"Eh? What? Cat? No, no cat."

"I was conscious of a distinct impression that I had heard a cat mewling either in the room or very near to where we are sitting."

"Probably a taxi or something in the street."

"I fear I do not follow you."

"I mean to say, taxis squawk, you know. Rather like cats in a sort of way."

"I had not observed the resemblance," he said rather coldly.

"Have some lemon squash," I said. The conversation seemed to be getting rather difficult.

"Thank you. Half a glassful, if I may." The hell-brew appeared to buck him up, for he resumed in a slightly more pally manner. "I have a particular dislike for cats . . . But I was saying . . . Oh, yes! Sometimes I am positively appalled at what I see around me. It is not only the cases which come under my professional notice, painful as many of those are. It is what I see as I go about London. Sometimes it seems to me that the whole world is mentally unbalanced. This very morning, for example, a most singular and distressing occurrence took place as I was driving from my house to the club. The day being clement, I had instructed my chauffeur to open my landaulet, and I was leaning back, deriving no little pleasure from the sunshine, when our progress was arrested in the middle of the thoroughfare by one of those blocks in the traffic which are inevitable in so congested a system as that of London."

I suppose I had been letting my mind wander a bit, for when he stopped and took a sip of lemon squash I had a feeling that I was listening to a lecture and was expected to say something.

"Hear, hear!" I said.

## Jeeves the Blighter

"I beg your pardon?"

"Nothing, nothing. You were saying . . ."

"The vehicles proceeding in the opposite direction had also been temporarily arrested, but after a moment they were permitted to proceed. I had fallen into a meditation, when suddenly the most extraordinary thing took place. My hat was snatched abruptly from my head! And as I looked back I perceived it being waved in a kind of feverish triumph from the interior of a taxicab, which, even as I looked, disappeared through a gap in the traffic and was lost to sight."

I didn't laugh, but I distinctly heard a couple of my floating ribs part from their moorings under the strain.

"Must have been meant for a practical joke," I said. "What?"

This suggestion didn't seem to please the old boy.

"I trust," he said, "I am not deficient in an appreciation of the humorous, but I confess that I am at a loss to detect anything akin to a pleasantry in the outrage. The action was beyond a question that of a mentally unbalanced subject. These mental lesions may express themselves in almost any form. The Duke of Ramfurline, to whom I had occasion to allude just now, is under the impression—this is in the strictest confidence—that he is a canary; and his seizure today, which so perturbed Lord Alastair, was due to the fact that a careless footman had neglected to bring him his morning lump of sugar. Cases are common, again, of men waylaying women and cutting off portions of their hair. It is from a branch of this latter form of mania that I should be disposed to imagine that my assailant was suffering. I can only trust that he will be placed under proper control before he . . . Mr. Wooster, there is a cat close at hand! It is *not* in the street! The mewing appears to come from the adjoining room."

This time, I had to admit, there was no doubt about it. There was a distinct sound of mewing coming from the next room. I punched the bell for Jeeves, who drifted in and stood waiting with an air of respectful devotion.

"Sir?"

"Oh, Jeeves!"

I said. "Cats! What about it? Are there any cats in the flat?"

"Only the three in my bedroom, sir."

"What!"

"Cats in his bedroom!" I heard Sir Roderick whisper in a kind of stricken way, and his eyes hit me amidships like a couple of bullets.

"What do you mean," I said, "only the three in my bedroom?"

"The black one, the tabby, and the small lemon-colored animal, sir."

"What on earth . . .?"

I charged round the table in the direction of the door. Unfortunately, Sir Roderick had just decided to edge in that direction himself, with the result that we collided in the doorway with a good deal of force and staggered out into the hall together. He came smartly out of the clinch and grabbed an umbrella from the rack.

"Stand back!" he shouted, waving it over his head. "Stand back, sir! I am armed!"

It seemed to me that the moment had come to be soothing.

"Awfully sorry I barged into you," I said. "Wouldn't have

had it happen for worlds. I was just dashing out to have a look into things."

He appeared a trifle reassured, and lowered the umbrella. But just then the most frightful shindy started in the bedroom. It sounded as though all the cats in London, assisted by delegates from outlying suburbs, had got together to settle their differences once for all. A sort of augmented orchestra of cats.

"This noise is unendurable," yelled Sir Roderick. "I cannot hear myself speak."

"I fancy, sir," said Jeeves respectfully, "that the animals may have become somewhat exhilarated as the result of having discovered the fish under Mr. Wooster's bed."

The old boy tottered.

"Fish! Did I hear you rightly?"

"Sir?"

"Did you say that there was a fish under Mr. Wooster's bed?"

"Yes, sir."

Sir Roderick gave a moan, and reached for his hat and stick.

"You aren't going?" I said.

"Mr. Wooster, I am going! I prefer to spend my leisure time in less eccentric society."

"But I say . . . Here, I must come with you. I'm sure the whole business can be explained . . . Jeeves, my hat."

Jeeves rallied round. I took the hat from him and shoved it on my head.

"Good heavens!"

Bestly shock it was! The bally thing had absolutely engulfed me, if you know what I mean. Even as I was putting it on, I got a sort of impression that it was a trifle roomy; and no sooner had I let go of it than it settled down over my ears like a kind of extinguisher.

"I say! This isn't my hat!"

"It is *my* hat!" said Sir Roderick in about the coldest, nastiest voice I'd ever heard. "The hat which was stolen from me this morning as I drove in my car."

"But . . ."

I suppose Napoleon or somebody like that would have been equal to the situation, but I'm bound to say it was too much for me. I just stood there goggling in a sort of coma, while the old boy lifted the hat off me and turned to Jeeves.

"I should be glad, my man," he said, "if you would accompany me a few yards down the street. I wish to ask you some questions."

"Very good, sir."

"Here, but, I say . . .!" I began, but he left me standing. He stalked out, followed by Jeeves. And at

that moment the row in the bedroom started again, louder than ever.

I was about fed up with the whole thing. I mean, cats in

your bedroom . . . A bit thick, what? I didn't know how the dickens they had got in, but I was jolly well resolved that they weren't going to stay picnicking there any longer. I flung open the door. I got a momentary flash of about a hundred and fifteen cats of all sizes and colors scrapping in the middle of the room, and then they all shot past me with a rush and out of the front door; and all that was left of the mob scene was the head of a whacking big fish, lying on the carpet and staring up at me in a rather austere sort of way, as if it wanted a written explanation and apology.

There was something about the thing's expression that absolutely



There Sir Roderick's topper was being waved at him from a passing taxicab.

J.D. SKIDMORE

chilled me. It wasn't my fault, but all the same I felt like a murderer gazing at the corpse of his victim, and I withdrew on tiptoe and shut the door. And, as I backed across the hall, I bumped into some one.

"Oh, sorry!" he said.

I spun round. It was the pink-faced chappie, Lord Something-or-other, the fellow I had met with Claude and Eustace before lunch.

"I say," he said apologetically, "awfully sorry to bother you, but those weren't my cats I met just now legging it downstairs, were they? They looked like my cats."

"They came out of my bedroom."

"Then they were my cats!" he said sadly. "Oh, dash it!"

"Did you put cats in my bedroom?"

"Your man, what's-his-name, did. He rather decently said I could keep them there till my train went. I'd just come to fetch them. And now they've gone! Oh well, it can't be helped, I suppose! I'll take the hat and the fish, anyway. Could you dig them out?"

I was beginning to dislike this chappie.

"Did you put that bally fish there, too?"

"No, that was Eustace's. The hat was Claude's."

I sank limply into a chair.

"I say, you couldn't explain this, could you?" I said.

The chappie gazed at me in mild surprise.

"Why, don't you know all about it? I say!" He blushed profusely. "Why, if you don't know about it, I shouldn't wonder if the whole thing didn't seem rather rummy to you."

"Rummy is the word."

"It was for The Seekers, you know."

"The Seekers?"

"Rather a blood club, you know, up at Oxford, which your cousins and I are rather keen on getting into. You have to pinch something, you know, to get elected. Some sort of a souvenir, you know. A policeman's helmet, you know, or a door knocker or something, you know. The room's decorated with the things at the annual dinner, and every-

body makes speeches and all that sort of thing. Rather jolly! It's a very push sort of institution, you know, only the really good men ever get elected. Well, we wanted rather to make a sort of special effort and do the thing in style, if you understand, so we came up to London to see if we couldn't pick up something here that would be a bit out of the ordinary. And we had the most amazing luck right from the start. Your cousin Claude managed to collect a quite decent top hat out of a passing car, and your cousin Eustace got away with a really goodish salmon or something from Harrod's, and I snaffled three excellent cats all in the first hour. We were fearfully braced, I can tell you. And then the difficulty was to know where to park the things till our train went. You look so beastly conspicuous, you know, tooling about London with a fish and a lot of cats. And then Eustace remembered you, and we all came on here in a cab. You were out, but your man said it would be all right. When we met you, you were in such a hurry that we hadn't time to explain. We took it for granted that your man would tell you all about it . . . Well, I think I'll be taking the hat if you don't mind."

"It's gone."

"Gone?"

"The fellow you pinched it from happened to be the man who was lunching here. He took it away with him."

"Oh, I say! Poor old Claude will be upset. Well, how about the goodish salmon or something?"

"Would you care to view the remains?"

He seemed all broken up when he saw the wreckage.

"I doubt if the committee would accept that," he said sadly. "There isn't a frightful lot of it left, what?"

"The cats ate the rest."

He sighed deeply.

"No cats, no fish, no hat . . . We've had all our trouble for nothing. I do call that hard! And on top of that . . . I say, I hate to ask you, but you couldn't lend me a tenner, could you?"

"A tenner? What for?"

"Well, the fact is, I've got to pop round and bail Claude and Eustace out. They've been arrested."

"Arrested!"

"Yes. You see, what with the excitement of collaring the hat and the salmon or something, added to the fact that we had rather a festive lunch, they got a bit above themselves, poor chaps, and tried to pinch a motor lorry. Silly, of course, because they had made themselves a snip for election by getting the hat and the salmon or something, and anyway I don't see how they could have got the thing to Oxford and shown it to the committee. Still, there wasn't any reasoning with them, and when the driver started making a fuss, there was a bit of a mix up and Claude and Eustace are more or less languishing in Vine Street police station till I pop round and bail them out. So if you could manage a tenner . . . Oh, thanks, that's fearfully good of you! It would have been too bad to leave them there, what? I mean, they're both such frightfully good chaps, you know. Everybody likes them up at the varsity. They're fearfully popular."

"My hat," Sir Roderick explained, "was snatched abruptly from my head. An unprecedented thing!"

"I bet they are!" I said.

When Jeeves came back, I was waiting for him on the mat. I wanted speech with the blighter.

"Well?" I said.

"Sir Roderick asked me a number of questions, sir, respecting your habits and mode of life, to which I replied guardedly."

"I don't care about that. What I want to know is why you didn't explain the whole thing to him right at the start? A word from you would put everything clear."

"Yes, sir."

"Now he's gone off thinking me a loony."

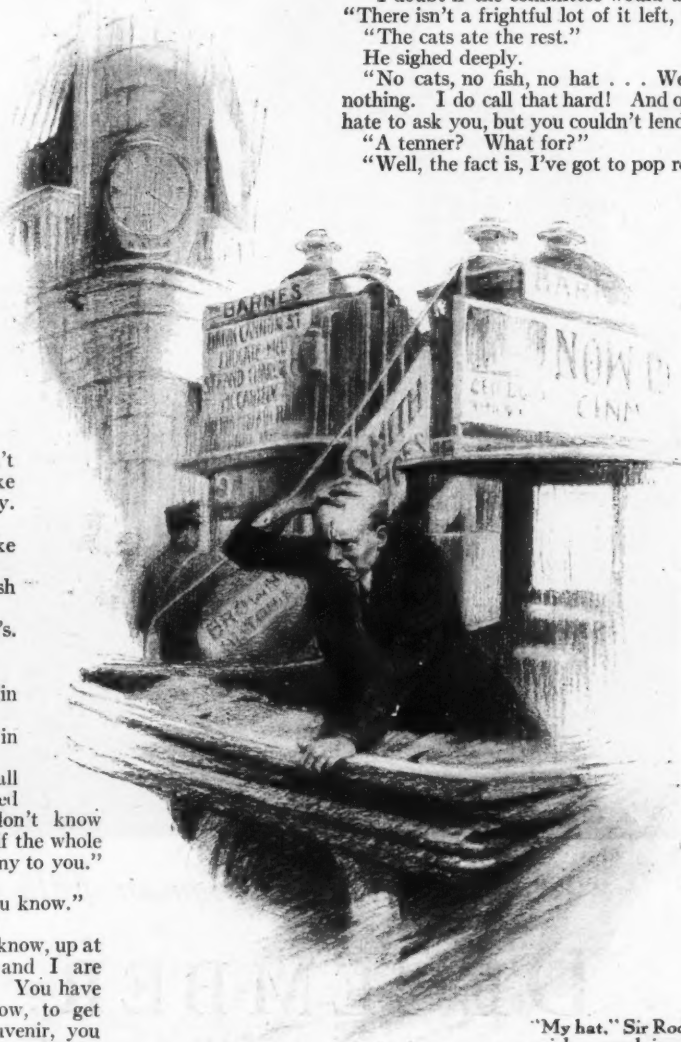
"I should not be surprised, from his conversation with me, sir, if some such idea had entered his head."

I was just starting in to speak, when the telephone bell rang. Jeeves answered it.

"No, madam, Mr. Wooster is not in. No, madam, I do not know when he will return. No, madam, he left no message. Yes, madam, I will inform him." He put back the receiver.

"Mrs. Gregson, sir."

Aunt Agatha! I had been expecting it. Ever since the luncheon party had blown out a fuse, (Concluded on page 106)





"You have taken a man for a model and painted a beast!" said Beryl. "Believe it or not, that is Arabian," replied Garstin.



*Can a woman fall in love at the*

## DECEMBER LOVE

### *The story begins:*

**T**HE story of Lady Sellingworth is the story of a woman's innermost heart. Lady Sellingworth was a noted beauty and a leader in London's social activity, but at the age of fifty she suddenly withdrew from society and gave herself up to old age.

Her retirement was supposed to have had some connection with a trip to Paris and the disappearance of her famous jewels—and with a mysterious brown man. To no one, however, has she ever confided the truth of the matter.

Now, ten years later, she meets Alick Craven, a promising young man in the Foreign Office, and a warm friendship develops between them. Beryl Van Tuyn, a rich young American girl, a friend of both Lady Sellingworth and Craven, also likes Craven—just how much she has not seriously considered; but this growing intimacy between Craven and Lady Sellingworth she views with some misgivings.

At Dick Garstin's studio Beryl has met a tall, dark man who has piqued her interest. She describes him to Garstin as "a living bronze." Garstin, intrigued by the mysterious foreigner and admiring his handsome head, arranges to do a portrait of him, with the understanding that after it has been exhibited it shall belong to this man who, beyond telling that his name is

Nicolas Arabian, has imparted no information about himself.

Francis Braybrooke, who had introduced Craven to Lady Sellingworth, is concerned about the growing intimacy between them. He can understand how Lady Sellingworth in her loneliness could welcome Craven's frank admiration and loyalty, but he realizes that a strong friendship between Lady Sellingworth and Craven is quite incompatible with a love affair between Craven and Beryl Van Tuyn. And in his self-appointed capacity as matchmaker his mind is pleased with the thought of the suitability of a marriage between these two young friends of his.

Craven becomes aware that his friendship for Lady Sellingworth is a subject of gossip, and that people are beginning to talk about Lady Sellingworth's "new man."

Meanwhile Garstin is studying Arabian, trying to make him out. The portrait goes badly and Garstin urges Beryl to help him discover the riddle of this mysterious, reserved man whom Garstin has conjectured to be a king of the underworld. Garstin taunts Beryl with his belief that Arabian is in love with her. She confesses that there is something indefinably attractive about him, but that she can not understand him.

Lady Sellingworth feels herself dangerously near to being in love with Craven; and she is a woman tormented, for she realizes the great differences between her feeling for Craven and his feeling for her. And so she prays that she may feel old, so old



Illustrations

by

W. D. Stevens

the same time with two different men?

## —by ROBERT HICHENS

Author of "The Garden of Allah," "Bella Donna" and "Barbary Sheep"

that she may cease being attracted by youth, from longing after youth. She writes a cool, almost brusque note to Craven saying she will be unable to see him that afternoon as had been arranged, and sends for Sir Seymour Portman, that lonely old man who has loved her so faithfully these many years, and who has never quite given up hope that some day she might accept him.

Lady Sellingworth knows that a marriage with him will shut a door of steel between herself and her past. Although she has resolved to accept him at last, she cannot bring herself to the point. So, unhappily, she mentally dismisses both Sir Seymour and Craven out of her life, the one as husband and the other as friend. In desperation she leaves London suddenly. Several weeks later she returns and learns from Beryl that Craven has been very attentive, and that he almost made love to her one day on the beach at Camber.

During Lady Sellingworth's absence Craven has persistently sought out Beryl, and an obscure instinct drives Beryl into intimacy with him because of Arabian, who, in spite of his silent reserve, exercises a profound influence over her. She begins to feel that she must know who and what Arabian is. Her mind continually goes out to him; and she is filled with anxiety, with suspicion, with jealousy, and with a strange sort of longing, mysteriously combined with repulsion and dread. Where will it lead her?

### The story goes on:

LADY SELLINGWORTH of course understood Beryl's purpose in visiting her so soon and in being so unreserved to her. Nevertheless she believed that Beryl had spoken the truth about what had happened at Camber.

When it began to get dark Craven had wanted to hold Beryl's hand.

Lady Sellingworth felt that she hated Beryl, hated Alick Craven. And herself? She did not want to contemplate herself. It seemed to her that she was fastened up with, chained to, a being she longed to ignore, to be without knowledge of. And she was aware also of that slow and terrible creeping of hatred, the thing that did harm to her that set her far away from any nobility she possessed.

She had gone abroad to fight and had come back having lost her battle. And already she was being scourged for her failure.

While she had been striving alone, these two had evidently forgotten her existence. Directly she had passed for a short time out of their lives they had come together. Youth had instinctively sought out youth, and she, the old woman, had been as one dead to them.

Beryl's lack of all affection for her did not seriously trouble her. But Craven's conduct was not what she had looked for. It

seemed to stamp him as typical, and she had supposed him to be exceptional. When Beryl had told her about Camber—so little and yet so much—she had been struck to the heart.

All those weeks! She had deliberately left the ground free to Beryl for all those weeks, and she had returned with no expectation of the thing that of course had happened.

When she had abruptly left England she had made up her mind to "have done with it," that is, to have done with love, to have done even with sentimental friendship. She had resolved to plunge into complete loneliness. Since she could not take Sir Seymour into her intimate life, since she now knew that was absolutely impossible, she must somehow manage to get along permanently with nothing. And so, yielding to a desperate impulse, she had resolved to seek an unaccustomed solitude. She had fled from London.

Ten years had elapsed since her last fit of folly. She must have changed since then. It was inevitable that she had changed. She had lied to herself in London when she had told herself that Craven would be satisfied in their friendship while she would be almost starving. Her subsequent prayer had been answered. Passion was dead in her. A tender, almost a motherly feeling—that really was what she felt and would always feel for Alick Craven. She need not fear such a feeling. She would not fear it. Morbidity had possessed her. The sunshine of Cannes had driven it away and finally she had decided to return to London.

But she had gone first to Geneva, and had put herself into the hands of a certain specialist, whose fame had recently reached the ears of a prominent member of the Old Guard, no other than the Duchess of Wellington.

And now she had come back with her sheaves and had been met on the threshold by Beryl with her hideous confidences.

She had not yet told Craven of her return. For the moment she was glad that she had not given way to her impulse and telephoned to him on the Sunday. Of course she would not telephone to him now. She resolved to ignore him.

Two days passed before Craven knew of Lady Sellingworth's return to Berkeley Square. Braybrooke told him of it in the Club and added the information that she had arrived on the previous Saturday, and asked, "Are you going to see her?"

"I've got a good deal to do just now," said Craven coldly and with a slight rise in color. "But of course I hope to see Lady Sellingworth again some day. She is a charming woman. It's always a pleasure to have a talk with her."

"Yes, indeed! By the way, who is Beryl Van Tuyn's extraordinarily good-looking friend? Do you happen to know?"

"What friend?" asked Craven, with sudden sharpness.

"The tall man she has been seen about with lately."

"I don't know."

"Lady Archie Brooks has met Miss Van Tuyn two or three times in Glebe Place, it seems, walking with a man whom she describes as a marvel of good looks. But there's Antring. I must have a word with him. He is just over from Paris."

Miss Van Tuyn had told him about this magnificently handsome man, this "living bronze," but somehow he had never thought of her as especially intimate with a fellow who frequented the Café Royal, and who apparently sat as a model to painters. But he now realized that this must be the man of Glebe Place, and he felt angry and injured.

Craven had not seen Miss Van Tuyn recently. No message came to him from Lady Sellingworth. Evidently the latter wished to have nothing more to do with him. She had now been in London for nearly a week without letting him know it. Miss Van Tuyn had telephoned once suggesting a meeting. But Craven had charmingly put her off, alleging a tiresome engagement. He did not choose now to seem eager to meet her. He was considering what he would do. If he could manage to meet her in Glebe Place! But how to contrive such an encounter? While he was meditating about this he was again rung up by Miss Van Tuyn who suggested that he should play golf with her at Beaconsfield on the following day, Saturday.

"You can't pretend you are working overtime at the Foreign Office tomorrow," she said.

Craven replied that the F. O. kept him very long even on Saturdays.

"What's the matter? What are you angry about?" asked Miss Van Tuyn through the telephone.

Craven intended to make a quietly evasive reply, but he found himself saying:

"If I work overtime at the F. O. are there not others who do much the same—in Glebe Place?"

After a pause Miss Van Tuyn said:

"I haven't an idea what you mean."

Craven said nothing. Already he was angry with himself and regretted his impulsiveness.

"Well?" said Miss Van Tuyn.

"Well?" retorted Craven, feeling rather absurd.

Again there was a pause. Then, speaking quickly, Miss Van Tuyn said, "If you can escape from the F. O. you might be in Glebe Place about five on Monday. Good by!"

And she rang off, leaving Craven with the pleasant sensation that, as often before, he had "given himself away." Certainly he had shown Miss Van Tuyn his jealousy. She must have guessed what his mention of Glebe Place meant. And yet she had asked him to go there on the following Monday. If he did not go perhaps that neglect would cancel his imprudence at the telephone.

He made up his mind not to go.

Nevertheless, when he left the Foreign Office on the Monday about half past four, instead of going towards Mayfair he found himself walking quickly in the direction of Chelsea.

Miss Van Tuyn was in Garstin's studio on that day. Although apparently calm and self-possessed she was in a condition of acute nervous excitement. Craven's mention of Glebe Place through the telephone had startled her. At once she had understood. People had begun to gossip and the gossip had reached Craven's ears. She had reddened as she stood by the telephone. A definite sensation of anxiety mingled with shame had crept in her. But it had been succeeded by a decisive feeling more really characteristic of her. As Craven now evidently knew of her close acquaintance with Arabian the two men should meet. She would conquer her reluctance and put Arabian to the test with Craven. Of course he might not choose to come. But if he were really jealous she thought he would come.

At last, after repeated failures, Garstin was beginning to work with energy and real satisfaction. Abruptly the force which had abandoned him had returned.

This change had occurred on the day of Miss Van Tuyn's conversation through the telephone with Craven, a Friday.

Arabian had refused to sit on the Saturday and Sunday. He said he was moving into his Chelsea flat and had many things to do. He could not come to the studio again till the Monday afternoon at half past two.

Garstin had cursed but he had not persisted. On the Monday he had received Arabian with frigid hauteur, but soon he had become intent on his work and had apparently forgotten his grievance.

Half past four struck—then the quarter to five. Garstin had been painting for more than two hours. Now he put down his brush and frowned, still looking at Arabian, who was sitting in an easy, almost casual position, with his magnificent brown throat and shoulders exposed.

"Finished!" he said, in his loud bass voice.

Miss Van Tuyn, who was curled up on a divan in a corner of the studio, moved and put down a book which she had been pretending to read. Garstin had forbidden her to come near to him that day while he was painting.

"Finished!" she exclaimed. "Do you mean—"

"No, damn it, I don't!" said Garstin, with exasperation. "I don't! Do you take me for a magician, or what? I have finished for today! Now then!"

He began to move the easel. Miss Van Tuyn got up, and Arabian, without saying a word, stretched himself, looked at her steadily for a moment, then pulled up his silk vest, and carefully buttoned it with his strong looking fingers. Then he, too, got up and went away to the dressing room to put on his shirt, waistcoat, coat, collar and tie.

"May I see, Dick?" asked Miss Van Tuyn.

"No, you mayn't."

"Are you satisfied?"

"He's coming out more as I want him this time."

"Do you think you have found his secret?"

"Or yours, eh? What is happening in you, my girl?"

Before she could answer a telephone bell rang below.

"Curse it!" said Garstin, going towards the staircase.

Before he went down he turned round and said:

"You're traveling fast."

And he disappeared.

"Beryl!"

It was Garstin's voice roaring up from below.

She started, turned, and went to the head of the stairs.

"What is it?"





"If I could explain my reason for leaving London so suddenly," Lady Sellingworth said, "you would realize what my friendship means."

"The telephone's for you. Come along down!"

"It must be old Fanny!" said Miss Van Tuyn, with a touch of irritation. "Nobody else would know I was here."

She took the receiver out of his hand.

"I'm here! Who is it?" she asked, as he left her and returned to the studio. "Is it you, Fanny?"

"Yes!" replied a rather weak and agitated voice. "Oh, my dear! Oh, Beryl!"

"What on earth is the matter? Are you ill?"

"Oh, Beryl, there's bad news!"

"Bad news! What news?"

"A cable has come from the Bahamas."

"The Bahamas! Well? Well?"

"Your poor father is dead. Oh, Beryl!"

Miss Van Tuyn stood quite still for a moment.

"My father—dead!" she thought.

She felt surprised. She felt shocked. But she was not conscious of any real sorrow. She very seldom saw her father. Since he had married again—he had married a woman with whom he was very much in love—his strongly independent daugh-



Beryl noted the grim line of Craven's lips and the hard, searching glance he shot at her companion.

ter had faded into the background of his life. Beryl had not set her eyes upon him during the last eighteen months. It was impossible that she could miss him much. Yet she had had a shock. After an instant she said:

"Thank you, Fanny. I shall be home very soon. Of course I shall leave the studio at once. Good by."

She went upstairs slowly. And as she went she resolved not to say anything about what had happened to Dick Garstin.

She found the two men standing together in the studio. Arabian had on his overcoat and gloves, and was holding his hat and umbrella.

"It was only Fanny Cronin!" she said. "I must go."

"I will walk with you to a taxi if you will kindly allow me," said Arabian, getting her fur coat.

"Thank you!"

As he stood behind her helping her to get into the coat she was conscious of a strange and terrible feeling of fear, mingled with an intense desire to give herself up to the power in this man. Was Craven outside? Something in her hoped, almost prayed, that

he might be. It was surely the part of her that was afraid.

"Good by, Dick," she said in an offhand voice.

"Good by," he said. "Take good care of her, Arabian."

She sent him a look full of intense and hostile inquiry. He met it with a half amused smile.

"I shall do better now," he said.

"Ah?" said Arabian, looking polite and imperturbable.

"Come along!" said Miss Van Tuyn. "It must be getting late."

And she went down the stairs followed by Arabian.

Miss Van Tuyn opened the door. A soft gust of wind blew some small rain into her face.

"Let me hold my umbrella over you, please," said Arabian. "Do take my arm while we look for a taxi."

"No, no!"

She walked on.

"There is nothing the matter, I hope?"

"I had some bad news through the telephone. My father is dead!" she added.

"I am deeply grieved, deeply. Please accept from me my most full sympathy."

"Thank you. I scarcely ever saw my father, but naturally this news has upset me. He died in the Bahamas."

"How very sad! So far away!"

"Yes."

They were still standing together, and he was holding his umbrella over her head, and gazing down at her earnestly, when Craven turned the corner of the road and came up to them. Miss Van Tuyn flushed. Although she had asked Craven to come she felt startled when she saw him, and her confusion of mind increased. Before she was able to recover her normal self-possession Craven had taken off his hat to her and gone rapidly past them. She had just time to see the grim line of his lips, and the hard, searching glance he sent to her companion.

"May I make a suggestion, Miss Van Tuyn?" Arabian said.

"What is it?"

"My little flat is close by, in Rose Tree Gardens. It is not quite arranged but tea will be ready. Let me please offer you a cup of tea and a cigarette. There is a taxi!"

He made a signal with his left hand.

"We will keep it at the door, so that you may at once leave when you feel refreshed. You have had this bad shock. You need a moment to recover."

The cab stopped beside them.

"No, really I must go home," she said, with an attempt at determination.

"Of course! But please let me have the privilege. You have told me first of all of your grief. That is real friendship. Let me, then, be also friendly and help you to recover yourself."

"But really I must—"

"Four, Rose Tree Gardens! You know them?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good!"

The taxi glided away from the curb.

And Miss Van Tuyn made no further protest. She had a strange feeling just then that her will had abandoned her.

When the cab stopped she said:

"I can only stay five minutes."

"Certainly! Please wait for the lady!"

Miss Van Tuyn was vaguely glad to hear him say that to the chauffeur.

She got out and looked upwards. She saw a big block of flats towering up in front of her.

"On the other side they face the river Thames," said Arabian. "We will go up in the elevator."

They passed through a handsome hall and stepped into the lift, which carried them up to the fourth floor of the building. Arabian put a latchkey into a polished mahogany door with a big letter M, in brass, nailed to it.

"Please!" he said, standing back for Miss Van Tuyn to pass in.

But she hesitated. While she paused, but before she had said anything, she heard a quiet step, and a thin man of about thirty, with a very dark narrow face and light gray eyes, appeared.

"Please bring tea for two at once," said Arabian in Spanish. "Yes, sir, in a moment," said the man, also in Spanish. Miss Van Tuyn stepped in, and the door was gently shut behind her by Arabian's man servant.

Arabian opened the second door on the left of the hall.

"This is my little salon," he said. "May I—"

"No, thank you. I'll keep on my coat. I must go home in a minute. I shall have a good deal to do. Really I oughtn't to be here at all. If anyone—after such news—" She looked at Arabian. She had just had news of the death of her father and she had come out to tea with this man. Was she crazy?

"I don't know why I came!" she said, bluntly, angrily almost.

"Do please sit down," he said, pushing forward a large armchair. "If these curtains were not drawn we could see the river Thames from here. It is a fine view."

He bent down and poked the fire, then stood beside it looking down at her as she sat in the chair.

"Are you here for long?" she asked.

"I do not quite know. That depends."

His large eyes were fixed upon her as he said this, and she longed to ask him what intentions he had with regard to her. He had never made love to her. He had never been even what is sometimes called "foolish" with her. Not a word to which she could object had ever come from his lips. By no action had he ever claimed anything from her. And yet she felt that in some way he was governing her, was imposing his will on her. Garstin said he, Arabian, was in love with her. Probably he was. But if he was in love with her why did he never hint at it when they were alone together except by the expression in his eyes?

The dark man brought in tea on a large silver tray. She began to drink it hastily.

"You—forgive me for asking—you will not leave London because of this sad news?" said Arabian.

"Do you mean for America?"

"Yes."

Miss Van Tuyn had not thought of such a possibility till he alluded to it. She could not of course be at her father's funeral. That was impossible. But suddenly it occurred to her that she had no doubt come into a very large fortune. There might be business to do. She might have to cross the Atlantic. At the thought of this possibility her sense of confusion and almost of mental blankness increased, and yet she realized more vividly than before, the death of her father.

"I don't know. I don't think so. No, thank you. I won't smoke. I must go. I ought never to have come after receiving such news."

She stood up. He took her hand. His was warm and strong, and a great deal of his personality seemed to her to be in its clasp—too much indeed.

"You will not go to America without telling me?" he said.

"No, no. Of course not."

"You told me first of your sorrow!"

"Why—why did I?" she thought, wondering.

"And you came here to me."

"No, no! With you!"

"To my rooms in spite of your grief. We are friends from tonight."

"Tonight . . . but it is afternoon!"

He still had her hand in his. She felt or fancied she felt, a pulse beating in his hand. It gave her a sense of terrible intimacy with him, as if she were close to the very sources of his being. And yet she knew nothing about him.

"It gets dark so early now," he said.

Dark! As he said it she thought, "That's his word! That's his word!" Everyone has his word, and dark was Arabian's.

"Good by," she said.

"I will take you down."

Quietly, and very naturally, he let her hand go. And at once she had a sensation of being out in the cold.

They went down together in the lift. Just as they left it, and were in the hall, a woman whom Miss Van Tuyn knew slightly, a Mrs. Birchington, an intimate of the Ackroyde and Lady Wrackley set, met them coming from the entrance.

"Oh, Miss Van Tuyn!" she said, stopping.

She held out her hand, looking from Miss Van Tuyn to Arabian.

"How are you?"

Her light eyes were searching and inquisitive. She had an evening paper in her hand.

"I—I am so grieved," she added, again looking at Arabian.



Craven took off his hat and stared icily—just that and nothing more.

"Mr. Arabian—Mrs. Birchington!" Miss Van Tuyn felt obliged to say.

Mrs. Birchington and Arabian bowed.

"Grieved!" said Miss Van Tuyn.

"Yes. I have just seen the sad news about your father in the paper."

Miss Van Tuyn realized at once that she was caught, unless she lied. But she did not choose to lie before Arabian. Something—her pride of a free American girl perhaps—forbade that. And she only said:

"Thank you for your kind sympathy. Good by."

"Good by."

Mrs. Birchington bowed again to Arabian, swept him with her sharp inquisitive eyes, and stepped into the lift.

"She lives here," he said. "In the apartment opposite to mine."

As Miss Van Tuyn drove away towards Claridge's she wondered whether Arabian was glad because of that fortuitous meeting.

Because of it her close intimacy with him—it would certainly now be called, and thought of as that— (Continued on page 133)





# Stories *that* Have

By MONTAGUE GLASS

**N**O PARTICULAR significance is attached to the adjective "bloody" in America, even when used in anger. In England, however, it is considered to be extremely profane, although nobody seems to know why. The theatrical public in London was much shocked when in the second act of *Pygmalion*, Mrs. Patrick Campbell made her exit with the line, "Not bloody likely." Mr. Chesterton and Mr. Belloc profess to find in the word the rudiments of a terrible oath held to be sacrilegious in pre-Reformation days. All this is by way of explaining why it struck me as funny when the other day I saw in an English comic paper the picture of a middle-aged man slipping on an orange peel and swearing roundly in the presence of his wife and little son.

"Mamma," the little boy says, "how did daddy know that was a blood orange?"

**M**Y FRIEND Duncan tells this Scotch story. He says that at a street fair in Scotland, the owner of a try-your-strength machine left it unguarded over night with the heavy wooden mallet beside it. There was a sign on it which said:

SIXPENCE IF YOU HIT HARD ENOUGH  
TO RING THE BELL.

All through the night, the noise of heavy mallet blows resounded through the Scotch village, and in the morning when the proprietor arrived at his machine, he found ten Scotchmen stretched dead at its base. They had died practicing.

**A**N AMERICAN in the building business was recently being driven around Brussels by a cabman. He was accompanied by an American friend who speaks French, and at each public building they passed, the builder would invariably ask how long it had taken to build it.

"The cabman says that this is the palace where the King lives," the friend said, at one of their stops.

"How long did it take to build?" the builder asked.

The friend put the question to the cabman.

"About ten years," was the reply.

"In America," the builder said after the cabman's answer had been translated, "it would have taken six months at the outside."

The cabman was duly told and made no comment. Nor did he say anything when the builder, after having been told that it had taken twelve years to build the Opera House and eight years to build the Bourse, said that in America they could have been finished in twelve months and eight months respectively. The cabman also managed to restrain himself when the American builder, after having been informed that it had consumed two centuries to finish the Church of Sainte Gudeule, said that in America it could have been done between May and November of the same year.

At last they reached the Palais de Justice, the largest public building in Europe.

"And how long did it take to build this one?" the builder asked.

His friend translated the question to the cabman who shrugged his shoulders and made a voluble explanation.

"What does he say?" the builder asked.

"He says he doesn't know," the friend replied, "because he

hasn't driven by here since the day before yesterday and at that time it was a vacant lot."

**L**UCIUS WOLCOTT HITCHCOCK, the illustrator, says that in his native town, as in everybody's native town, they take an interest in the boys who go out into the world of Chicago and New York. Nevertheless they accept with some reserve the judgment of these cities as to the character and attainments of the boys with whom they grew up and played. One day when a United States District Judge returned from Chicago to revisit the scenes of his childhood, he was a trifle hurt by the indifference of his old neighbors.

"Do they know that in Chicago they made me United States District Judge?" he asked the station agent.

"Yep," the station agent replied.

"What do they say?" he inquired anxiously.

"They laugh," the station agent said.



**M**R. E. V. LUCAS, in one of his essays, cites as the two classic examples of American humor, the stories (a) of the man who jumped off the twenty-five story building with his rubber boots on into the fire net and bounced up and down so many times that the sheriff had to shoot him to keep him from starving to death; and (b) of the jerkwater railroad that had the cowcatcher on the rear of the train to prevent the cows from running after the last car, climbing aboard and biting the passengers.

To my mind, a better example is the advice of the Tammany boss to politicians who contemplated suing newspapers for libel.

"Don't sue," he said. "They might prove it on you."

**E**VEN undergraduates of the best universities can't spell. A Yale student, for instance, was writing a letter to his father.

"How do you spell financially?" he asked his roommate.

"You spell it with two I's," the roommate said and then added, "embarrassed is spelled with two r's and two s's."





# Made Me Laugh

—the Famous Humorist

A LITTLE second hand clothing dealer with an extremely large bundle, says the London *Bystander*, seated himself in a London County Council tram, which is *Bystander* for a municipal trolley car. He bought a penny ticket entitling him to ride two miles and at the end of the two miles, he was approached by the guard who wears the same uniform as an American conductor and performs the same duties with a trifle more politeness.



"Another penny please," the guard said.

"Mister," the clothing dealer protested, "I'm a poor, seek man. I got a big bundle here. Please, let meride a little farther."

"Another 'alf mile then," the guard said.

But at the end of the half mile the clothing dealer showed no disposition to move.

"Look 'ere," the guard said, "yer 'alf mile is up."

"I know it is," the clothing dealer replied wearily, "but mister, I'm a poor, seek man, and I've got a big bundle, and—"

"It is a big bundle and off it goes," the guard said, and a moment later he heaved it from the back platform into the street.

"Oi!" the clothing dealer wailed as the bundle hit the pavement. "My poor partner!"

LEONARD MERRICK the English novelist many years ago told the following yarn which he subsequently expanded into a fairly long short story.

He was sitting, he said, on the *banquette* or wall bench of a London café writing a letter. A young Frenchman sat at the next table, gazing sadly at a glass of grenadine. Suddenly, to Merrick's astonishment, the young Frenchman burst into tears.

"What on earth is the matter?" Merrick asked.

"That melody!" the Frenchman exclaimed. "That ever haunting melody!"

And then for the first time, Merrick noticed that outside in the street a piano organ was playing the refrain of a French song popular the year before in the Paris music halls.

"What's haunting about it?" Merrick asked.

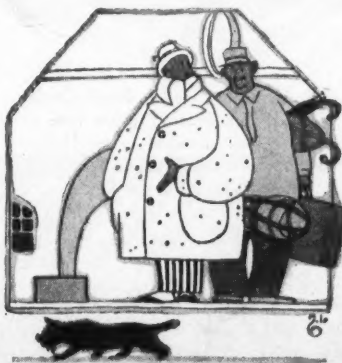
"Seems like a very jolly melody to me."

"To you perhaps," the Frenchman said,

"but to me, how different!"

And then he told the following story:

"Figure to yourself, *M'sieu*, that there is a young and charming *chantreuse* in one of the small music halls on the Boulevard Richard-Lenoir. She is blonde, beautiful and talented, but no success, because she has not the proper vehicle for her talent. One day two friends, also young, also talented, enter the music hall. They are Tricotrin the poet and Pitou the composer—not yet arrived it is true, but of genius nevertheless. It is love at first sight with both. Both would die for her, both would live for her, and after they



make her acquaintance, both of them insist that she is wasted on the Boulevard Richard-Lenoir. Understand, *M'sieu*, they do not quarrel over this young lady. Instead their affection for her only cements their friendship the closer, and under the influence of their common love affair, they collaborate on a song. It is the song you have just heard outside. The young *chantreuse* sings it at one performance—just one, and immediately, she is the rage of Paris. She leaves the Boulevard Richard-Lenoir for an engagement at the Ambassadeurs and these two friends are glad for her sake. The flames of their pure if divided love for her burns brighter and brighter, until one day she meets a young French lawyer. He is the son of rich, distinguished parents, not bad looking, but already dissipated, *M'sieu*, dissipated, and he in turn falls violently in love with the successful *chantreuse*. But what happens to Tricotrin and Pitou? For the sake of this young French lawyer, she spurns these two souls, Tricotrin and Pitou. She shows the utmost ingratitude. They call on her. She is not at home. She leaves instructions with the stage door keeper of the Ambassadeurs to kick them out if they attempt to see her at the theater, and the stage door keeper does so—three times. At last they abandon all hope, and so return to their beloved Montmartre—these two, Tricotrin and Pitou, lonely, broken-hearted."

The young Frenchman here rested his head again on the table and renewed his tears.

"And which one are you?" Merrick asked. "Tricotrin or Pitou?"

"Neither," the Frenchman replied through his tears. "I am the young French lawyer of distinguished parentage."

TWO highwaymen held up a Scotchman, who resisted them stubbornly. They fought for over half an hour and at last after a desperate effort, they succeeded in overpowering him and proceeded to go through his pockets as thoroughly as their crippled condition permitted. They found nothing on him but one solitary sixpence.



The highwaymen looked at each other, appraising the damage done to their battered faces, and disgust and disappointment left them momentarily speechless.

Finally one of them said:

"It's hard lines on us to get banged up like this, when all he had on him was sixpence."

"Wisht!" the other said. "If it had been a shilling he would have killed the both of us!"

A PASSENGER on an English railway was waiting at a junction for a connecting train when a large, black cat walked out of the station building and crossed the tracks. It possessed only the merest stump of a tail. The passenger turned to a porter and pointed to the cat's tail.

"Manx?" he said.

"No sir," the porter replied respectfully but laconically, "the 9:45."

## Lillian Russell's Reminiscences

(Continued from page 26)

bottom and worked himself up to eminence as a wizard of stage direction.

He was the stage director of Drury Lane Theater, where all of the greatest melodramas were produced. The fact that he had been knighted did not cause him to cease dropping his "h's" with nonchalance, or to mask his inherent crudeness.

I remember one incident which showed more clearly than anything else the surface callousness of the man—the cockney veneer of hardness—and the tenderness of heart it hid. We needed for one scene in *The Queen of Brilliants* two or three old circus men who could play clowns. Sir Augustus decided to advertise.

Old men by the dozen came straggling into the theater in answer to the advertisement. Bleary-eyed old men, dirty old men, red-nosed old men whose clothes were in tatters and who had long ago lost any pretense as actors. Sir Augustus used to roar at them, "Wot! you used to be with a circus? G'warn! They wouldn't feed you to a lion! Wot! You a trick rider once! A 'orse wouldn't let you near 'im."

Then one day the saddest of the lot appeared; a tottering old figure in a tattered checked suit and rusty tall hat, cracked at the brim. His shoes were broken like a motion picture comedian's, and his poor old eyes watery and dim with age. He managed to get across the stage to Sir Augustus and asked in a pleasant and dignified voice, "Are you Sir Augustus Harris?" "That I am," said Harris. "I have come about this engagement," said the old fellow, showing the wrinkled clipping he had brought. "You!" jeered Sir Augustus in a bored manner. "You'd die on our 'ands before the performance was over! Take your bloomin' 'ook and git out." But the old fellow did not move.

"I have a letter for you," he quavered, pulling an envelope out of his pocket. The letter was stained and barely legible. Sir Augustus made an attempt at gruffness. "Take your letter and get out, old man, before I 'ave you put out," he said. "Read the poor old man's letter," I suggested, taking the letter from the old fellow and handing it to Sir Augustus. He took it reluctantly, and read it aloud before he realized what it contained. "To whom it may concern: Should this letter ever come under the eye of any of my children, do all you can for this man. He helped me when no one else would. In God's Name. Signed, Augustus Harris."

"It's from my father!" cried Augustus. I was standing close beside Sir Augustus and watched him very closely. His face was set as he turned abruptly and roughly said to the company, "That's all for today, everybody—10 o'clock tomorrow,

and come blooming well perfect in your lines." When he turned and looked at me again, there were tears in his eyes.

The result was, of course, that our poor old man became an honored member of the cast. He had a job as long as he lived, for Sir Augustus never forgot him or ceased his efforts to make him comfortable. "I'm only doing my duty," he would say stubbornly when I told him what a good story for the papers the incident would make. "Well," I answered, "if you won't give it to the papers, I'll write it myself some day"—and I have!

One of the most charming incidents of my trip to London, was my presentation to the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII. He sat in the Royal Box at Irving's Theater one evening during the performance of *The Queen of Brilliants*.

At the end of the second act, I received the flattering news that His Highness had

scene, with me and had them carry my train across the stage to the entrance of the Royal Box.

I had been carefully warned by Mr. Charles Abud, the acting manager, that I must be sure to make a deep curtsy. "Are you sure you know how to make one low and gracefully enough?" he asked fustily. I replied, "Don't you think a woman who has played duchesses and princesses as long as I have should know how to make a deep curtsy without tripping?" We passed up a few steps into the anteroom which separated the Royal Box from the stage. Through this box I saw an attractive man dressed in scrupulous elegance. He came forward as I approached and made my deep curtsy.

The Prince held his hand out to me, lifting me firmly up—"You mustn't do that," he said smilingly, and led me into the room.

There I was presented to the Princess of Wales (Queen Alexandra), Prince Louis of Battenburg, Princess Beatrice, Princess Louise, while the Prince beamed on me good-naturedly and asked me all manner of questions about myself. "How lovely you sing! How long are you going to stay in England? I hope we can keep you a long, long time." I told him that I had to return to America in a few months. "Oh, no, please don't!" he pleaded, like a little boy. "We want you over here. We deserve you, too, for we gave the United States Henry Irving in exchange for you. So you must stay."

The Princess of Wales came forward and complimented me on my voice, and mentioned two of the songs that particularly pleased her. Princess Beatrice asked if I had brought my lovely gowns from America. I told her that they were made in London by the house of Frederick.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "our own royal dressmaker. How charming!"

Poor Madam Frederick, who was a German Baroness, was peremptorily given two weeks to get out of England with her entire establishment of twenty years building at the declaration of war between Germany and the Allies in 1914. Through the kindness of Queen Mary, however, she was permitted twenty-one days.

After a few kind remarks the Prince said: "We are going to be so nice to you here that you will not want to leave us. I want to hear you sing some of Tosti's songs before long." I told him I hoped to be permitted to sing them for him, and I bowed out gracefully, I hope, for my train was very long and my pages had left to get into their street clothes and were on the Strand by that time.

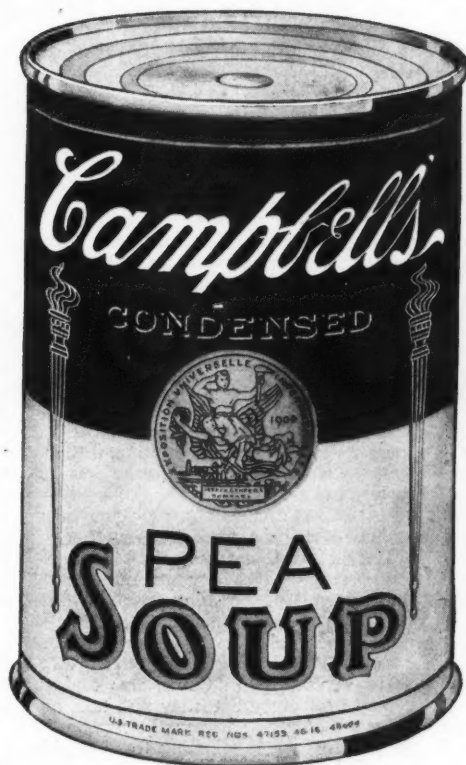
Before I leave the subject of the Prince of Wales I must tell a little anecdote about his grandson, the present Prince of Wales, whom we have recently entertained here in America. When this Prince was a small boy he went to school in the Isle of Wight. He was devoted to his great grandmother, Queen Victoria, and wrote



Th Drinking Song in *Girofle-Girofla* turned my dressing room into a wine cellar. Almost every dealer who came to the World's Fair sent me a case of champagne.

requested my appearance in the Royal Box. I wore the same gown in which I appeared on the stage in the second act—a shimmering jeweled evening dress with a tiara and a long court train. I called two of the little pages who appeared in a





I love the kind of good peas  
Campbell's always use—  
Sweet and young and small peas  
You yourself would choose.



**21 kinds**  
**12 cents a can**

**For health and enjoyment—  
eat good pea soup!**

And Campbell's Pea Soup is good! Every glowing spoonful of it will delight and refresh you. Tiny peas, the daintiest from the vines, give their sunny sweetness to it, enriched by pure country milk, creamery butter and delicate seasoning. You couldn't place a more wholesome or delightful dish on your table than Campbell's Pea Soup. And if you have children, it should be one of your stand-bys. They will thrive on its light, wholesome, easily digested nourishment.

**Campbell's SOUPS**

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her a letter faithfully every week while there, telling her how happy he was to receive her lovely letters, and how much he loved her, begging her never to forget to write to him every week. The Queen did write a letter to him every week, and the story is that he sold those letters for a guinea (\$5.00) each to the other boys in the school who wanted the Queen's autograph. Quite a little business man—that attractive young prince! This story came to me from one of the boys who went to that school at the Isle of Wight, and who purchased one of the letters.

I met the Prince again, just before the close of *The Queen of Brilliants*, at a dinner given at Lord Rothschild's house in Piccadilly. I learned that he had asked Lord Rothschild to have me there in order that he might hear me sing the Tosti songs. When I arrived I was ushered in to dinner and found a group of ordinary homey-looking people who carried more titles than seemed believable when one looked at them. I was seated at the dinner table on the right of Lord Lonsdale but I could not eat or drink before I had sung. They appeared to enjoy the songs and the Prince again told me that he had enjoyed listening to my voice, and thanked me for singing the songs of his favorite composer, Tosti. He repeated again the wish that I would not leave England.

When the ladies retired to the drawing room, I found myself among numerous Princesses and Duchesses, but I found them not at all antagonistic or patronizing. It was amusing to me to discover that they were exactly like all other women I had met all over the world. They wanted to know what kind of powder I used, whether my hair was naturally golden, how I kept my face free from wrinkles, and how lucky it was that I was an actress. They wanted beauty receipts and charm receipts. They were likably human and inquisitively good-natured.

I told them the same thing I have been telling American women for years since then; that I kept my health, and what beauty I possessed, by keeping regular hours and being abstemious in both food and drink; that my hair had always been the same shade, and that the business of being an actress was quite like the business of being anything else, and had no particular feeling attached to it, other than doing what I had to do in the best and most artistic manner.

I was sent to my home in Lord Rothschild's carriage, and next day I received his check for 500 pounds (\$2500).

It was due to Madame Nordica, my lifelong and admired friend, that my stay in England was made doubly interesting, for I lived in her charming home. She was in America when I left for England, and rented me her London House, Number 11 Clarence Terrace, Regent Park, for the duration of my engagement.

Regent Park is, of course, a crown possession. Money is no admittance to its sacrosanct ground, permission of the crown being essential. I am sure it was due to Madame's friendship with many of the Royal Family that she was able to secure a long lease on the Regent Park property.

Madame Lillian Nordica was one of the most beautiful and interesting women whom it has been my good fortune to have as a friend. I was very fortunate in meeting her while we were both singing in New

York, during her great vogue at the Metropolitan Opera House. I was playing at the Casino and spent many delightful hours with her when she was at leisure, and sometimes when, with Isadore Luckstone at the piano, she studied her operatic rôles.

On the days when she did not sing in some opera, she worked on a new score or rehearsed an opera that was to be produced the following week. I had positive proof of the extent of her repertoire when I lived at her house in London. There I found her music room filled with hundreds of opera scores, all of which were marked and worn, showing evidences of her indefatigable study. She was a veritable inspiration to me—always optimistic—always sympathetic.

The engagement at Mr. Irving's theater was a constant joy to me. At Mr. Irving's suggestion, I occupied both his and Miss Ellen Terry's dressing rooms, as they were side by side in a little house back of the theater, connected by a hall and short staircase, far away from the other dressing rooms, and very quiet. I took his advice and used one room for a reception room and the other for a dressing room.

During that engagement I had my dinner served after each matinée in Mr. Irving's private drawing room, which was a large room just off the stage to the right, where Mr. Irving entertained his guests.

His servant, John Clark, was told to come to me every Saturday and take my order for dinner and learn the number of people whom I was having to dine with me. I learned that John's wife cooked the dinner, and that she was an excellent cook. She was! So naturally I took advantage of the comfort of not leaving the theater between the matinée and night performances, and enjoyed the courtesy of Mr. Irving's room and his ménage, and gave many nice little parties after the Saturday matinées.

I frequently asked John for the bill for my dinners. He invariably made some excuse and replied, "Yes, Madam, at the end of the engagement, please." But when the engagement ended, John simply handed me Mr. Irving's card on which was written, "Compliments of a brother artist," and his signature. I blush to think of the many guests I had at Sir Henry's expense. It was most embarrassing. When I asked John why he did not tell me the first Saturday I gave my order, that I need not have been so generous in my entertaining at Sir Henry's expense, all he replied was, "The more the merrier, I always 'ears Sir 'Enry say." I gave John a tip big enough to make my conscience guiltless, and the smile and thanks I received assured me that I would be well recommended to Sir Henry as a hostess.

An interesting incident occurred during the second week of *The Queen of Brilliants*. I did not know that Mr. Irving had not yet sailed for his American tour. I was about to leave the house one morning, to attend a luncheon at the Savoy Hotel. I called my maid to bring my jewel box, as I wanted some ornament appropriate to the gown I was wearing. She searched the room, then all through the house, and finally with a scream, she said, "We must have left it in the theater!"

I summoned a hansom cab and arriving

at the theater flew up the stairs to the dressing room. The door stood wide open. And there stood Sir Henry Irving in his Hamlet costume—the great Sargent painting his portrait! Anyone would have expected Irving to be annoyed at the intrusion and interruption. Not he! Smilingly he came forward, and apologized most humbly for intruding in my dressing room, and made all sorts of excuses for being there: his trip to America close at hand, his anxiety to have Sargent finish the portrait before his departure, and many other naïve excuses. At that moment, he was more like a boy than a great actor.

I was introduced to Mr. Sargent, and then my story began. I explained that I had left all my jewels in the dressing room the night before. "My God, child!" said Mr. Irving, "how careless, how very careless! Where are they?" and he started looking for my jewel case. "My dear, but you were careless. I don't see your jewel case anywhere about. We had better send for the cleaners." He was most anxious and excited. Looking past him to the dressing table, suddenly I said, "Why there it is! That soap box!" He handed it to me. Everything was just as I had left it the night before. His pleasant admonition was: "You were very wrong, my dear, and at the same time, very right. You were wrong to be so careless as to leave such valuable jewelry behind you in the dressing room, but you were mighty right to leave it in a soap box!" Of course he was right both ways.

After selecting a brooch and ring, I went to the mirror and adorned myself, offering my apologies for intruding. Sir Henry took my hand and said: "I adore you American girls! You seem to meet any situation with plenty of good humor, and a more plentiful amount of savoir-faire."

Sir Arthur Sullivan came to call upon me to congratulate me upon my London success, and said he would have fled to the continent sooner than testify on Gilbert's side during the *Princess Ida* lawsuit. "I want to write the music for an opera for you as soon as I finish this last work of Gilbert's," he said. "We shall no longer be collaborators when this is done. I have an opera you will like. Saville Clark wrote the libretto and you will be ideal in it."

He handed me the manuscript of a sparkling opera, *Peg Woffington*, and said: "I am not well and must take a year's rest after this production, so in order that no one shall have this vehicle but you, I am going to let you have it at the same price I paid Saville Clark's widow for it, so that it will be yours without question. I will write the music for it inside of two years."

I was glad to get a libretto from Sir Arthur that had met with so much praise from him. He never wrote the music of *Peg Woffington*, however—genial, great-hearted Irishman! He died before two years were over. The manuscript I still have. I never have found any musician to whom I cared to give the libretto for the musical setting. Now, however, I have given it to my daughter, who is writing it in Sullivan's style, and although I shall never play it, I shall be able to direct its production.

Of course I couldn't go through an engagement in England without having to contend with the usual case of mistaken identity. A very charming old lady was

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**THE GOLDEN BAR WITH THE CLEAN NAPHTHA ODOR**



brought to me by her son, who, with many apologies, said that his mother was sure I was her long lost daughter who had run away to America years before!

She had been to see me on the stage in *The Queen of Brilliants*, and had noticed my likeness to her daughter, and in one scene of the opera where I wore a dress of gray and white, the convent uniform of the school for girls, she had been positive that I was her daughter. The family had much trouble in getting her away from the theater, but she raved and was obsessed

with the idea that I was her child, until her son could do nothing but ask me to let her see me to prove that she was mistaken. I asked him to bring her to my dressing room, which he did and she was more convinced than ever that I was her long lost child! She kissed me and hugged me, and clung to me until I became fearful that the poor lady would become a little crazy when suddenly I thought to ask her her name. "Why, Russell," she cried, "and you are my daughter, Lillie."

*Why do proper exercises make a fat person slimmer and a thin person stouter? Lillian Russell tells in the next instalment of her Reminiscences—in May COSMOPOLITAN.*

## Elementals

(Continued from page 22)

reading. A shock of delight and release ran over his heart like warm wind; that was what you did to yourself by sitting alone and brooding. Why, she was just the same—a little paler, perhaps, but then she had never been ruddy. She was just the same—she held her book just as he had seen her hold it a hundred times. She was standing it superbly. Only three more days! He tapped once more impatiently.

She turned her head, saw him, smiled beautifully. Darling, darling! She got up, left her book by the chair and went over to the table for another one. How slowly she walked! Then she was at the window.

They had fooled Slake in one respect, anyhow. Thanks to his giving them books they were able to talk to each other—though he had carefully taken away all writing materials. They had tried lip-reading at first, but that was too hard; it really worked only with very simple sentences.

She held her copy of the Bible so that he could see. She pointed at a word on the page, "Good." She turned to another place, "Evening." To another, "Dear."

He smiled. How very like Catherine! Oh, Lord, if he could only get to her!

He had spent half an hour that afternoon looking for a sentence he knew must be somewhere. He grinned a little. Slake's experiment was an admirable training in Biblical exegesis, at least. Finally he found his sentence and pointed.

"The lions do lack and suffer hunger," it said.

She shook her head with mock dolefulness, then started turning leaves rapidly. "Happy shalt thou be and it shall be well with thee." Her finger ran along the line. "Thy wife." Then it stopped and he knew that she had meant it for a signature.

He dived into Proverbs—they didn't trip you up with "begats" and unimportant details of the construction of Solomon's temple.

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city. The destruction of the poor is their poverty."

His fingernail underlined the passage bitterly. She responded with something on the same page.

"Love covereth all transgressions. Love," she pointed again.

"Oh, my dear!" he breathed, "My dear!"

Her mouth made a soundless "Darling." They stood there for a moment with their books forgotten.

Then her face seemed to change a trifle; her hand went hesitatingly to her side. But she smiled reassuringly.

"I—am—all—right," her mouth said, forming the syllables slowly. She pointed again:

"Yet a little sleep—a little slumber—"

"Yes, do lie down!" he said earnestly, forgetting she could not hear him. Then, and after a fashion he would have thought only foolishly romantic four days ago, he pressed his lips against the cold glass. She smiled elfishly, faint color coming to her cheeks.

She put the tips of her fingers against her mouth and blew a kiss to him like a child before it is carried upstairs to bed. Then—very slowly, this time—she was walking back to her chair. He saw her hand clutch an instant at the back of it before she sat down.

He realized that his knees were trembling. Silly! His head swam for a moment, too—he felt the floor begin to turn like a plate underneath his feet. He set his teeth and managed to get back to his chair.

King David, in his angrier moods, was an admirable tonic. He turned to the Psalms—the ones about "Break their teeth in their mouths, oh Lord! Break the jawbones of the lions!" expressed his own feelings in regard to John Slake to his utmost satisfaction. He would like to have somebody breaking the teeth in Slake's mouth; in fact he would very much like to do it himself. His fist balled up; it knew how those even teeth would give and splinter when knuckles crashed into them. He would like to see Slake waste away like a snail in the sun, consume like burning grass. He would like—he would like!

"Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog," he read idly. A wrench of blinding pain passed over his mind. "My darling from the power of the dog."

The light failed gradually in the room. When it was quite gone Latimer rose and felt his way to the electric switch. There was another dumbshow of talk with Catherine that left him tottery. Then he went back to his chair again and sat there, thinking.

It was only then that I felt sure I could convince her that I was not her child. I told her my name was not Russell, that my real name was Leonard, and that Russell was only a stage name. She was terribly disappointed, and I felt so sorry for her that I could only try to console her by telling her what a wonderful mother I had, and how she would sympathize with her, and I promised to try and find her runaway daughter, Lillie Russell, when I returned to America—and she went away, almost happy.

After a while Slake came. The soft clink of a key in the door; Slake's head looking in rather cautiously.

"Good evening, Mr. Latimer."

"Good evening, Mr. Slake."

Latimer made his eyes lift and meet the probing intentness of those other eyes. A curious prickling thrill gripped his stomach for a moment; the man was so obviously, so damnably, so superbly well fed. He licked lips suddenly parched.

"Everything perfectly all right, I suppose, Mr. Latimer?"

"Everything—entirely—satisfactory—Mr. Slake."

Latimer forced the words. His eyes burned at the bulge of Slake's throat over his collar; at the ruddy shine on his cheeks that came from the quantity of good hot food he had just consumed.

"How—charming! You are admirable guests indeed, Mr. Latimer—you and Miss Vane. You make so little demand on ones hospitality."

He paused, smiling.

"I wished for you at dinner this evening—I really wished for you," he said smoothly. "The bisque had a trifle too much whipped cream in it for my personal taste, but the fish was perfection—baked bluefish, you know. And the roast—"

"Stop!" said Latimer suddenly and harshly through clenched teeth.

"Dear, dear, I forgot. My apologies." He gazed at Latimer with the curious dispassionateness of a scientist watching the ferment of life in a culture through the long eye of his microscope.

"So it has really begun to touch you—my elemental," he said amusedly.

"I have no complaints to make," said Latimer in a stifled voice. If he gripped his hands on the chair rim they would not tremble. It was nothing—only the sudden steam and odor of roasting meat that had risen in his mind like perfume at Slake's words.

"No complaints? And Miss Vane has no complain's. Very well. Good night."

The door closed softly after him. The key clinked again. Latimer stared at his book for a long while, making no sense of the jumble of black and white signs on the page.

A tapping on the window aroused him. Catherine!

"I—am—going—to—bed."

"Good night, dear," as he watched her lips. "Try and sleep."

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"Good night—oh, good night!"

Presently, Latimer thought, he would go to bed himself. "Who sleeps dines," the French said. Well—he would try.

Drowsiness came easily—sleep was harder. Drowsiness to lie and think of all the meals he had ever had, of all the different varieties of food that had ever existed—trooping through his mind like a restaurant keeper's nightmare. Winter breakfasts in the country—hot cakes, golden and puffy, a huge warm pile of them, drowned with yellow syrup. Little sausages sending a rich sharp steam into the air, crammed to bursting with crumbs of hot meat and spice. Lunch—dinner—bacon frying over a wood-smoke fire—a great pan of frizzling bacon—chicken à la King—a roast of rare beef, the thick good slices curling and bleeding away from the knife. All food—any food—burnt chops—cold mashed potato—if he had a dish of cold mashed potato here beside him he wouldn't care about forks or spoons—he would put his mouth to it as if he were tasting wine and when the last good, good bit of it was gone he would lick the dish all over with his tongue.

The day before, his mind had planned unconsciously a series of perfect meals—Lucullan feasts in which everything from the first roll to the final demi-tasse should be as composed and harmonized and unified as the tones of an April sunset or the scheme of a perfect concerto. Now his mind started stripping these visions of their unnecessary trappings, one by one. Rolls, for instance—rolls were only a filipp; and there were only one or two sorts of soup that one could really call *substantial*; *hors d'œuvres* were mere byplay—tantalizing your appetite; and things like napkins and waiters wholly inessential. Food, that was it, just food! Meat, cooked meat—and no finicking around about how done it was or wasn't—meat that sent its rich perfect smell up into your brain until you wanted to pick it up in your hands and worry it like an enemy—meat—

He lay back on his pillow almost trembling with the violence of his wish for a piece of meat. But after a while he managed to fall asleep.

It was light again. He looked in the mirror as he was dressing. He seemed to be having a great deal of trouble with his clothes this morning—they had too many buttons—they were hard to put on. A four days' beard had not improved his appearance, certainly—even shaving soap had been barred by Slake. But otherwise he seemed to himself to be much as usual. The cheeks were a little hollower perhaps; the beard made it hard to tell. His eyes, too—they seemed larger, somehow, and as if they were in fever. Only two days more!

When he was dressed, he got to his chair on legs that seemed yards from his body, sank into it and fell asleep again.

He was wakened from a dream in which the walls of the room had turned to meat. He ate and ate, but as soon as he swallowed a morsel it seemed to vanish into air; it never reached his stomach. Slake's voice:

"Good morning, Mr. Latimer."

The usual questions and answers. "I am perfectly satisfied." The key in the door. Ten hours till Slake came again:

Again he dreamed, and this time there was a long table like the buffet table of

a club directly in front of him. Slake was at his shoulder, purring: "There is your dinner, Mr. Latimer. You are quite at liberty to choose anything you like." But Latimer's hands were tied behind him and though he bent his neck forward till it seemed as if it would break, the food was always an inch beyond his lips. "Dinner is served, Mr. Latimer," and multitudes of people came and took food from the table, deliberately, boredly, gluttonously. They took it away. He could see them eating it; he could hear the munching of jaws, the tinkle of silver on china. "Not bad, the cold lobster—really, not bad at all." Saliva poured into his mouth; all the things that had ever been food since the beginning of time lay there in front of him, and he could not touch a morsel of it; he could not, though he strove with the last ache of his strength.

He woke and went for a drink of water. How *useless* water was. You could pour the flimsy stuff down your throat in gallons and it didn't help at all.

Catherine didn't get up till late today, he noticed—not until about the time when lunch would have ended—if there ever had been such a thing as lunch. She was wholly without color now; her face had the pallor of wax but her eyes were indomitable. They gave him strength for a little. Only now neither could stay at the window for more than a few minutes at a time; they were both too weak.

He was counting those infernal birds on the wall again, sometime in the afternoon; he didn't know what time. This time there were twenty-two on the wall that faced him. He counted them over and over. Twenty-two.

It was a good deal later. What was this stuff he had in his mouth—this thing you could chew and chew without ever getting sustenance? Oh, yes, he remembered now! In sieges—eating grass. Fooling your stomach by putting almost anything in it; that made it hurt less. But there wasn't any grass here, of course, so he had tried paper—a flyleaf out of the Koran. Disgusting. And then pieces of towel—it was probably towel he had now. But it didn't help.

It was night now. Slake had come in and taken away the books.

"I had forgotten that they might be—misapplied," he had said. That was probably because he had noticed the teeth-marks on the leather binding of that Hindu book.

Pain. Pain that was as much a part of him as the tick of his heart. Pain that took him up in its soft heavy hands and squeezed his body between them like a fruit. The line between actuality and those things that were only in the mind—the room in which he lived and those universes of hot food that swam before drowsy eyes like a succession of raw and gaudy lights—growing fainter and fainter like a line rubbed out of a drawing. Unspeakable weakness. Fever in the head. Bad dreams.

It had been dark for a while and now it was light again—real light, not electric light. Morning. Must get dressed before Slake came in for the morning. Slake had been in already—how many times? He didn't know.

He was sitting in his chair composedly when Slake entered. He must find out what day it was.



"Still no complaints, Mr. Latimer?"  
 "Still no complaints." He had let his eyelids droop a little—if Slake saw too close into his eyes, Slake would know.

"After all, Mr. Slake, it won't be for very much longer," he said in a voice that seemed to come thinly from a great distance.

"True," Slake was purring, "true. A mere question of hours, shall we say?" He was looking keenly at Latimer.

"Hours!" croaked Latimer avidly.  
 "Hours! Yes."

"Or shall we say—days?" Slake dropped the last word into the silence like a leaden weight.

"Days. Days. Is it days?"

"I'm afraid you will have to puzzle that out for yourself, Mr. Latimer."

The door closed.

Latimer was glad that he had had the foresight to move his chair directly under the window yesterday. Even so it had taken him the strugglings of an ant with an overlarge pebble and the sweat had poured from his hands at the end. Today it would have been just impossible. Today. Why, today it had been a matter of meticulously planned effort and conquest to get from his bed to his chair; and even so it would have taken him years to manage it if it hadn't been for the table which offered a prop and resting place midway.

He dozed fitfully, tormented by visions of plenty. It must be afternoon.

There was a feeble sound going on somewhere near him—a sound like the noise of a moth beating itself against the glass of a lamp. He raised his head and listened. Catherine?

He dragged himself to his feet, gripping on the windowsill for support till the tips of his fingers were white. There was a face at the other side of the window—Catherine's face.

The face was trying to smile. How could it smile? It was trying to speak, but his mind was too blurred to read what it said with its soundless, moving lips. All he knew was that the face was Catherine's and that she was starving.

He fell back from the window and covered his face with his hands.

He did not know how long the fit of ugly weeping lasted that shook him so hysterically. But when it was over, his mind, in spite of the intermittent burnings of its fever, was quite composed. This couldn't go on. This was over. They had come to the end.

After an immense amount of time had passed, Slake came. Latimer heard his key and quieted himself with a straining effort. He must speak slowly, calmly.

"I'm afraid—I shall have to withdraw from the contest—Mr. Slake."

"Really?" Slake's eyes were duller than stone. "When only a few more hours would have brought us to the most interesting part?"

"Yes."

"And—may I ask you why?"

"Catherine," said Latimer weakly. He was ashamed of not saying more but every word that he spoke seemed to take some of his life out with it as it left his mouth.

"I see," said Slake dubiously. "I see. And yet the young lady seems to be standing it very well—she is less plump, perhaps, but—well, I shall go and consult her."

# From 700 letters

## from those who are eating Fleischmann's Yeast

Doctors, mechanics, stenographers, housewives, teachers, nurses, clergymen, farmers, policemen, architects—in all, men and women in 113 different occupations recently told of their experiences with eating yeast for health

**T**HE reports came from all parts of the United States. Lawyers, artists, lumbermen wrote in. Housemaids and private secretaries. Dressmakers. Even a boxer told why he was eating Fleischmann's Yeast and what results he was getting.

Nearly 300 of those who wrote in were eating yeast to build up strength and vigor. 251 were freed from constipation by it. A great many others had digestion and appetite restored. Almost as many had been freed of pimples and boils.

### "After using every known cathartic"

Hundreds of men and women depend day after day on cathartics. Yet this never corrects their trouble. Here was a man who had used "every known cathartic" ever since he was eleven years old. At last he solved his problem. A simple food, Fleischmann's Yeast, eaten like cheese or butter, had stimulated the activity of the intestines and restored regular functions. Another who had been eating yeast for three months wrote "Since eating Fleischmann's Yeast I have had no bowel trouble." A woman eating yeast for constipation and gas had "greatly benefited" and also was delighted with the way her skin had cleared.

### "Suffered with gas for years. Cured after three weeks"

Many suffer for years with some digestive disturbance without ever realizing that faulty eating is the trouble. Since the fresh yeast cake has been known to have a beneficial effect on the entire digestive process, it is now being advised in cases of stomach and intestinal trouble.

Many men and women who had been suffering from poor appetite have regained appetite and vigor. One of them wrote, "My vitality is back to normal. I have a ravenous appetite and every morning I get up full of 'pep' and ambition."

In cases of rundown condition—men and women—astonishingly quick responses came after the addition of the health-stimulating Fleischmann's Yeast to the regular food. In some of these cases, improvement was noticed in less than one month.

### The ways they liked to eat it best

Some of these men and women did not like the taste of yeast at first. Almost all grew to like it. Most people took it in water. A number liked it in milk. It tastes something like an egg-nog. Many of the men liked it plain. Women liked to make sandwiches with it, or they took it in fruit juices. Two or three liked it in ice cream. One took it in soup. Several liked it in coffee.

Add 2 to 3 cakes of Fleischmann's Yeast to your own daily diet and notice the difference. Place a standing order with your grocer. 200,000 grocers carry Fleischmann's Yeast. If your grocer is not among them, write to the Fleischmann agency in your nearest city—they will supply you.

Send for free booklet telling all about yeast. Address THE FLEISCHMANN COMPANY, Dept. 16'4, 701 Washington St., New York.



**Fleischmann's Yeast builds up the system naturally by correcting digestive disturbance and restoring normal elimination**





## Often a bridesmaid but never a bride

**T**HE case of Geraldine Proctor was really pathetic. Most of the girls in her set were married, or about to be. Yet not one of them possessed more grace or charm or beauty than she.

And as Miss Proctor's birthdays crept gradually toward that tragic thirty-mark, marriage seemed farther away from her life than ever.

She was often a bridesmaid but never a bride.

Your mirror can't tell you when your breath is not right. And even your most intimate friends probably won't.

That's the insidious thing about halitosis (the medical term for unpleasant breath). Halitosis creeps upon you unawares. You may even have it for years without knowing so yourself.

That of course is when halitosis is a symptom of some deep-seated organic trouble a doctor must correct. Or maybe a dentist.

But so commonly halitosis is rather a temporary or local condition that will yield to more simple treatment.

Listerine, the well-known liquid antiseptic, possesses wonderful properties as a mouth deodorant. When regularly used, it arrests food fermentation and leaves the breath sweet, fresh and clean.

As such it becomes an indispensable friend to people who wish to enjoy the comfortable assurance that their breath is always beyond reproach.

Listerine will put you on the safe and polite side. Provide yourself with a bottle today and use it regularly as a gargle and mouth wash.

Your druggist has handled Listerine for years, and regards it as a safe, effective antiseptic of great merit.

Start using Listerine today. Don't be in doubt another day about your breath—Lambert Pharmacal Company, Saint Louis, Mo.

For  
**HALITOSIS**  
use  
**LISTERINE**



He turned away. In a short time he was back.

"I am sorry, Mr. Latimer, but Miss Vane refuses to consider any withdrawal on her part," he said, his eyes adance again. "And therefore, by the terms of our agreement—"

"Damn the agreement!" Latimer had risen now—he was moving toward Slake—moving with the tortuous cautiousness of the cripple—his right hand clenched.

"Damn the agreement—and you—and you—and you—you devil from hell!" and he suddenly snarled like a dog and sprang for Slake's throat.

"Oh, would you, Mr. Latimer, would you?"

Slake had put him aside like a doll; he was holding him off at arm's length; the slender, feminine fingers had tightened around his throat like strangling wire. Latimer did not speak, as speech is known to humanity; he made inarticulate gobbling sounds and beat with his hands, but his eyes glared into Slake's eyes with a passion that had gone beyond fear.

"What an exhibition of temper!" said Slake—the cut in his voice was as if he were speaking to some small biting sort of animal. "What a pitiful exhibition!" And then he flung Latimer from him as if the latter were made out of paper.

Latimer lay on the floor for a moment, whining and striving to crawl forward on incapable limbs. Then Slake had gone—but Latimer realized with a thin tinge of imbecile pride that he had backed his way to the door.

He was left alone with his hunger—and that last glimpse of Catherine's face.

Exactly what Latimer did and said and thought during the next twenty-four hours he was, fortunately, not to remember except in snatches. There was a great deal of noise all about him, for one thing—an endless drumming pulsation of sound that was somehow part of him and yet seemed to come from outside himself as well, and fill the whole world as a shell is filled with the tumult of the sea. He was the skin of the drum—and the drummer that played a measure for dancing skeletons upon it—and the twitching drumsticks—and the ear that heard and the mind that recorded all.

There was a squawking voice—not his own—it couldn't be his own—his voice had never sounded like that—that kept talking to itself and cursing somebody called Slake in a high, recurrent gasp. There were colors that streaked before his eyes like blots of vivid light, piercing colors of sunset-orange and scarlet and bright green. These settled to the burning ruddiness of the heart of a furnace; and that ruddiness was within him also, oddly. It scorched at him as if he were the furnace itself and some one had lighted a fire that ate over his bones and flesh without consuming one cell of them, with only torment. There was a reeling phantasmagoria of dreams like the patterns a madman draws in the air; and at the end of it a collapse into broken peace, a peace so complete and sightless that, he thought dully, he must have died.

Then somebody was carrying him like a great shattered toy along a smooth, paneled corridor.

"Nurse," he giggled to himself inanely, his lips moving with little sound.

He was being put down on something

*Cosmopolitan for April, 1922*

that yielded and was soft. For a long time it seemed to him, he lay there, delicately and easily, his body relaxed, as a man might lie in warm water.

After that measureless time he turned his head toward his left side. He was lying on a couch in a room which was not the room in which he had been tortured, he realized without surprise.

Three steps away from him, if he had been able to rise, there was another couch. A figure lay on the couch—a woman, by the dress. His eyes regarded her incuriously. Why was she there? His eyes went back to the ceiling. The ceiling was cool and white. It was nothing to do with pain.

After another time a faint prickling began to work like yeast inside his body. It ran all over him at first like the feet of a small and rapid animal. Then it settled to one place, as such an animal might settle, finding food. It began to gnaw.

He was hungry. He opened his mouth, but no sounds came. When people were hungry, they asked. Then they were given food, he seemed to remember. Food.

"Food," he said faintly, his lips writhing back from his teeth.

A voice from somewhere distant; a smooth voice. He hated the voice; it made his flesh bristle as if he had stroked the fur of a cat the wrong way.

"There is food on the floor," said the voice. It waited. "There is food on the floor," it said again.

He raised himself on one arm with an immensity of effort. His eyes looked at the space between the two couches. There was something there on a plate—something white and solid. A slice of bread.

The figure on the other couch had stirred now, too. It had raised itself on an arm—its great eyes stared at the bread. Then its eyes left the bread and looked into his, without recognition. His muscles began to tense. That thing on the other couch had seen the food, too. That thing wanted the food as bitterly and wholly as he wanted it; he could tell that by its eyes.

For a long time they lay there, looking at each other suspiciously, like starving dogs across a bone. Then Latimer looked at the bread again, and his whole body seemed to grow thin with longing. It was such a little, little piece of bread.

Slowly, with the cautious movements of a thief, putting his hands in front of him like the paws of a cat, Latimer slid down from the couch. Then he rested on all fours for a moment, gazing at the woman. A vast wave of unspeakable relief passed through his body. She had not got down from her couch to meet him—to fight him for that food. She was not able. She could only lie there and stare at the bread with eyes that seemed to pierce it; most intent, most hopeless eyes.

His hand reached out and touched the bread, shyly. He shivered, as a dog shivers on being stroked, at the exquisiteness of that touch. There was not very much of it—that piece of bread—but its surface was rough and pleasant. He knew to the last quarter-crumble of it how tinglingly rich and satisfying it would be. It was good bread. Good bread.

The woman on the couch had made a tiny despairing sound at seeing him touch the bread. For a moment, now that the bread was in his hands, he forgot about it, looking at her. Who was she, that strange

gaunt woman who could not move to come down and take the bread away from him? His mind tried perplexedly to remember—for ages, it seemed.

It was pitiful to see her lying there, making no movement. After he had eaten the bread he might have strength enough to go over to her and find out who she was and what she wanted. Not now, though. Not now.

The lust for the bread possessed him until he shuddered. His fingers closed over it, grippingly, tenderly, possessively. In a moment he would feel the first sweet taste of it on his tongue. His hand began to go to his mouth—not very fast or he might drop the bread.

Somewhere in the room some one who was not the woman had laughed. He paused, hugging the bread to his breast, his eyes going furtively about him. They should not have that bread—it was his, his, his!

A frail whisper of sound came to his ears.

"Sherwood," it was saying. "Sherwood." He nodded. That was his name. He was Sherwood Latimer, the man who had bread at last.

"Sherry!" said the whisper, again, insistently, growing stronger. "Oh Sherry, dear!"

The bread was very near his mouth now—his mouth that slavered at it unconsciously—but he did not look at it. He looked at the strange woman.

"Sherry, dear. Dear Sherry. Oh, Sherry, I'm so hungry!" the voice wailed thinly like a child.

And then there was a soft bright shock in his mind like the impact of a blunted arrow and the whole room seemed to right itself before him as if it had been swinging upside down in space. That was Catherine, that lean, worn image of fever on the couch. That was Catherine, Catherine, Catherine! And she was hungry.

Sighing, he put the bread away from his lips. It was all very simple now.

Holding the hand with the bread in it in front of him as a dog holds out a hurt paw, he began the immense journey across the floor to the other couch. Catherine was hungry, so he must feed her; that was all. It was very lucky indeed, he thought dully, that somebody had left that piece of bread on the plate.

He reached her side and rose clumsily to his knees. He broke the bread into two pieces and laid one carefully on the floor. If she was as hungry as he was, it wouldn't be good for her to eat that whole slice of bread all at once—he remembered that now.

His arm went around her shoulders, the hand settled and was at rest in the soft curls of her hair. The other hand had crumbled a small piece of bread. Their eyes looked at each other deeply; this time they knew.

"Dear Sherry," she said with a gulp. Something burned behind his eyes like salt.

"Bread. Eat it," he said childishly, in a choking voice. His head sank on her breast. Even now, and though she was Catherine, he could hardly bear to see her take the bread. He waited agonizedly for her to be finished. When she was, in spite of everything, he would give her the rest.



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Then he felt his hand at her mouth being pushed away by her weak hand. He raised his head.

"You first—you're—you're *hungrier!*"

she said in a whisper. His fingers relaxed. The bread fell to the floor.

"Time!" said a voice behind them, and then, "Time—all over!" And then, "Oh

## Without the Net

(Continued from page 58)

when a flashlight was turned on near the big stick at the far end. (Ours was a three ring circus and we carried three masts large enough for the greatest sailing vessel ever built.)

It couldn't be Larry. I knew, because Larry carried a kerosene lantern and not a flashlight. Who then?

Perhaps it was none of my business but I decided to find out, and proceeded silently to the distant part of the tent. Whoever it was seemed to be busily engaged in something because the light was kept on and stayed in one place.

With a thrill of genuine surprise I discovered, when I got near enough, that one of the trapezes used in Bob's act had been lowered to the ground. It was the high one, the one he used for the big stunt at the finish of the act.

Why? I couldn't imagine the answer. I stood still and watched to find out.

A pair of hands were working in the light of the flash lantern, doing something to one of the cable supports of the flying bar.

Those hands were Carlotta's. I recognized them even if I could not see her face.

You can well imagine I was interested, and I watched spellbound while she unwrapped the tape which bound the ends of the cable to make the loop on which it was hung to the upper bar. This done, she began to file through the strands of wire which went to make up the splice. I watched her while she severed over half of them and then carefully bound up the place again so it could not be seen. Sick at heart, I turned and left the tent as noiselessly as I had entered.

What a dreadful finish for the season of happiness which we had enjoyed upon the brink of the volcano. For this was the end. There could be no more pleasant association with the two most charming people who had ever come into my life, the only two people in the world whom I cared anything about. Because I must either turn Carlotta over to the law or see Bob go to his death. There was absolutely no alternative that I could see.

What she had done was a trick known at least by legend to every member of the aerial acrobat family. The cables of which our apparatus is composed are all tested to double the strength to which they will ever be subjected. The core of those silken ropes which you see supporting trapezes, rings, etc., is composed of pleated wires, something like picture cord, very strong and very flexible. Carlotta had filed through all but a very small number of those fine wires.

It may seem to you that my problem was simple, that all I had to do was report what I had seen and let justice take its course. It was by no means so easy as all that.

I knew Bob well enough to be sure that he would not consent to turning Carlotta over to the police. According to his warped code of justice he would be just as likely as not to uphold her in her as-

sumption of the powers of the law. He felt that she was entitled to his life any time she wanted to call for it. I had often heard him say so in those exact words. He would never forgive me, either, if I turned her over to the police without telling him my reason for doing it.

The secret of the matter was, of course, that Bob was desperately in love with her. You can't expect a man to have sense when he is sentimental.

All through the night I wrestled with my problem. After breakfast I had a period of a little more than five hours until the doors would be opened for the afternoon performance. I had every performer's devotion to the routine of the show and felt that nothing must happen to interfere with that routine after the Grand Entry was on. I had to decide what I was going to do before the band struck up.

I couldn't think of anything better than to lay the matter before Bob after all. If he refused to be reasonable I could decide what to do on my own hook afterwards.

He considered my statement thoughtfully. Then he sighed. "Thank God!" he said finally. "It's going to be over with!"

"But it isn't, Bob!" I protested. "That's the reason I am telling you this, so it won't be over with."

He shook his head. I thought he'd be a damned fool like that. I told him so and pointed out a lot of reasons why we couldn't let it happen. One of them was the fact that Carlotta herself could never be happy if she had a thing like that on her conscience.

"That's what I'm banking on, old timer," said Bob seriously. "You see I know something you don't know."

I sniffed skeptically.

"Yes I do. Carlotta's in love with me! I'm not being conceited in saying this. I love her so much that I can't help knowing it. Her love and her hate are equally balanced."

"Don't forget she has been planning this for months," I reminded him. "She won't abandon it now."

"Which trapeze was she working on?" Bob questioned. "It is one of mine, of course, but which one, the low one or the high one?"

"The high one."

"Humph! And how many wires do you think she has filed through?"

"Better than half of them."

"I don't think that's enough. A quarter of them would support my weight. That's a special cable used so that we take no chances when we put the double strain on it when she comes up from the mat. So you see there's very little danger anyway."

I'm here to tell anybody who will listen that that was slim comfort indeed.

"What are you going to do?" I asked Bob.

He regarded me thoughtfully. "Nothing," he decided.

That was as I had feared.

pick it up, you babies, do you think I'm going to feed you?" in tones of outrageous disappointment. But they were not listening. They were holding each other close.

I groaned. "We've got to do something!"

"No," Bob insisted. "And I'll tell you why. If we stop her this time she'll only think up something else."

"But you're not going to let yourself be killed just to satisfy the fool girl's notions as to what she thinks is her duty?"

"I don't think I'll have to be killed," replied Bob. "If the worst comes to the worst, I'll stand for it because it'll have to come anyway. But I'm going to take a gamble. I'm going to bet my life against the thing I want most in all the world."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that Carlotta will never let me get on to that trapeze. If she does—if her hate is stronger than her love I don't care to live anyway. If she doesn't, why, man alive, we three will be the happiest people in the world with everything evil put behind us. Can't you see how it will clear the atmosphere? You'll be a grandfather yet."

He put his arm around my shoulder and hugged me as if I really were his father as he had suggested.

"Why, old man, what are you crying about?"

"I can't let you do it," I said huskily. "I care too much about you."

"And just as much about Carlotta too, don't you, old horse?" he reminded.

I was lying on the horns of a terrible dilemma. Whatever I did I would be sorry for to the last of my days.

The bugle blew the half-hour call. The more youthful and eager spectators were already gathered waiting for the ticket wagon to open.

### VII

AFTER Bob had gone to dress I still had a lot of time to fight it out with myself; to be tortured by the terrible uncertainty as to what I should do for the welfare of two people I loved.

I tried to get some comfort out of Bob's statement that by cutting only a little over half of the wires she had still left enough to support his weight safely. It was while I was thinking about that statement that I hit upon something we had both missed before. Carlotta had purposely left enough wires on the cable to hold until her own weight was added to his so that at the conclusion of the act they would come crashing down together, hand in hand. It was a deed characteristic of her race and of her love. She would not have cared to live after Bob's death and her mind had, apparently, at last evolved a revenge that also included the measure of her devotion.

This conclusion knocked out any comfort I might have had from Bob's assurance that she loved him too much to send him to his death. Perhaps she did love him too much to send him—but not to go with him.

I had to stop it. I had to.



**Dress Your Hair to Emphasize Your Best Lines and Reduce Your Poor Ones**

*Begin by studying your profile. If you have a short nose, do not put your hair on the top of your head; if you have a round, full face, do not fluff your hair out too much at the sides; if your face is very thin and long, then you should fluff your hair out at the sides. The woman with the full face and double chin should wear her hair high. All these and other individual features must be taken into consideration in selecting the proper hairdress. Above all, simplicity should prevail. You are always most attractive when your hair looks most natural—when it looks most like you.*

# Making the MOST of Your Hair

## How to Make Your Hair Make You More Attractive

**EVERYWHERE** you go your hair is noticed most critically. It tells the world what you are.

If you wear your hair becomingly and always have it beautifully clean and well-kept, it adds more than anything else to your attractiveness.

Beautiful hair is not just a matter of luck, it is simply a matter of care.

Study your hair, take a hand mirror and look at the front, the sides, and the back. Try doing it up in various ways. See just how it looks best.

A slight change in the way you dress your hair, or in the way you care for it, makes all the difference in the world in its appearance.

In caring for the hair, shampooing is always the most important thing. It is the shampooing which brings out the real life and lustre, natural wave and color, and makes your hair soft, fresh and luxuriant.

When your hair is dry, dull and heavy, lifeless, stiff and gummy, and the strands cling together, and it feels harsh and disagreeable to the touch, it is because your hair has not been shampooed properly.

When your hair has been shampooed properly, and is thoroughly clean, it will be glossy, smooth and bright, delightfully fresh-looking, soft and silky.

While your hair must have frequent and regular washing to keep it beautiful, it cannot stand the harsh effect of ordinary soaps. The free alkali in ordinary soaps soon dries the scalp, makes the hair brittle and ruins it.

That is why discriminating people use Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo. This clear, pure and entirely greaseless product cannot possibly injure and it does not dry the scalp or make the hair brittle, no matter how often you use it.

You will be surprised to see how really beautiful you can make your hair look, if you will follow this simple method.

### A Simple, Easy Method

**FIRST**, wet the hair and scalp in clear, warm water. Then, apply a little Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo, rubbing it

in thoroughly, all over the scalp and throughout the entire length, down to the ends of the hair.

Two or three teaspoonfuls will make an abundance of rich, creamy lather. This should be rubbed in thoroughly and briskly with the finger tips, so as to loosen the dandruff and small particles of dust and dirt that stick to the scalp. When you have done this, rinse the hair and scalp thoroughly, using clear, fresh warm water. Then use another application of Mulsified. You can easily tell when the hair is perfectly clean, for it will be soft and silky in the water.

### Rinse the Hair Thoroughly

**THIS** is very important. After the final washing the hair and scalp should be rinsed in at least two changes of good warm water and followed with a rinsing in cold water. After a Mulsified shampoo, you will find the hair will dry quickly and evenly and have the appearance of being much thicker and heavier than it is.

If you want to always be remembered for your beautiful well-kept hair, make it a rule to set a certain day each week for a Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo. This regular weekly shampooing will keep the scalp soft, and the hair fine and silky, bright, fresh-looking and fluffy, wavy and easy to manage, and it will be noticed and admired by everyone.

You can get Mulsified Coconut Oil Shampoo at any drug store or toilet goods counter, anywhere in the world. A 4-ounce bottle should last for months.

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Another advantage is its shape—each Cap net is fashioned to give the room needed and yet fit snugly around the edge of the hair.

West Nets are re-inforced with 2 extra meshes to the net, making them stronger and more durable.

*Ask for, Insist On and Be Sure You  
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*If your dealer cannot supply you, order from us direct, enclosing purchase price and dealer's name and address.*

Our new booklet "Guide To Hairdressing At Home" illustrates and explains how to accomplish the new and fashionable coiffures. Sent postpaid on receipt of 6c. Send coupon today.

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The performance was already on but their act came late—almost at the conclusion of the show. I had to think as I had never thought before.

Finally I hit upon the plan. It wasn't much of a plan but it was the only thing my poor mind could turn up. The best thing about the solution was that it might save them both.

I borrowed a workman's uniform from one of the circus property men so that I would not be conspicuous and went in with the crowd of them when they were putting up the apparatus for the trained animal act that took place in the ring during Bob and Carlotta's aerial stunt.

Bob and Carlotta were already in the air going through the preliminary stuff. I had not much time to lose but there was plenty.

When the other property men left the ring I lingered behind and when all attention was focused on the acrobats in the air I began to climb the ladder which led to Bob's stand. As I have said, I was an acrobat once myself so it was not so difficult for me to make the long climb as it might have been. But, of course, I was hampered by my wooden leg and by my enormous weight so I would have to go pretty slowly.

I was halfway up before anyone saw me and then it was only a ringmaster on the ground below and I paid no attention to him. He couldn't do anything without raising a disturbance or stopping the show.

Bob and Carlotta had no time to notice what was going on. An acrobat in midair has to watch his step, you can well believe, even if there is nothing to step on.

I reached the top. I had Bob's trapeze in my hand. It was tied to his stand ready for him to swing out.

Bob and Carlotta were through with the rest of their act. They saw me. Bob, at least, knew what I was going to do and why.

He called out to me, "John don't!"

I shook my head. He knew what I meant. I was going to do it for both of them—the only thing I could do. He knew as well as I did that my weight was as great as the two of them together, that when I swung off, the remaining strands of wire would part.

It made me a little dizzy to think of it and I dared not look down to the ground, reeling below me, but something inside drove me on to a finish. What did those few more years of life that were left of me mean after all? It would be over in a few seconds and I could go with my boots on. I took some pride in that thought.

Everyone had noticed me by now, even the band leader, and he had stopped his musicians, sensing that something was wrong. I wondered ironically if the drummer would give me a roll as I started, if he would give me a crash of cymbals as I struck the ground.

I looked at Carlotta climbing hastily to her perch next to the canvas and I looked at Bob swinging paralyzed beneath me. To him I whispered good by.

I took hold with both hands on the bar and swung off with my eyes shut.

At the end of five seconds I opened my eyes and found myself still hanging by hands that were already beginning to ache with the unaccustomed strain of supporting my weight.

"Hang on!" commanded Bob from be-

low. "Just a few seconds longer!" he encouraged. He must have known that my grip was weakening. I could almost have cried with vexation. There was something almost heroic about swinging off on a trapeze that I expected to break, but to have my strength give out, to die because I was old and weak, that was merely ignominious, useless. And in spite of Bob's encouraging words I could not see how any help could reach me in time.

But I had figured without Carlotta. I was facing her in my swing so I could see what she was doing. She was poised on her stand with her head against the canvas, quite a bit higher than I. With her trapeze in her hand she swung off. Even then I couldn't figure what she intended to do. If she thought that I might be able to swing to her and catch her in mid-air, as I might have done in my younger days, she was thoroughly mistaken, I wouldn't even have dared to risk the attempt.

And I was slipping, slipping!

She swung out and back. Apparently she wasn't satisfied. Next time she jumped with her swing to give it added impetus. At the end of the swing she let go and came through the air like a shot and with hands outstretched to grasp the cables of the trapeze by which I was swinging.

With a sinking heart I remembered, as I saw her in the air, that those cables were weak and that even if they were strong enough to support my body, the added weight of hers would finish them. And I hadn't the courage to let go in order to make her safe.

Miraculously the cables held.

Above me the slight silk clad figure worked like lightning. She slipped to a position across the bar, slipped to a knee hold, dropped down forward and wrapped her arms firmly around my body, under my own arms.

"There," she said with a sigh. My own fingers slipped from the bar as I fainted!

## VIII

I WAS on the ground when I came to. They had lowered the entire apparatus in order to rescue us from our perilous plight. The circus tent was empty of spectators. Only a few of the performers and a number of the workmen stood around us.

Bob had one arm under my head. The other was around the shoulders of Carlotta whom he held to him as if he were afraid some one was going to take her away.

"Thank God!" he said when I opened my eyes, "we've got both of you left!"

When I could speak I started to question Carlotta. "Why—?" I began.

But she silenced me with a shake of her head.

"I couldn't do it!" she explained in answer to my unspoken question. "I came back and put in a new cable. That trapeze would have held three men your size."

"But why—?" I began again.

"For the same reason," she answered shyly, "that you did what you did."

"You mean," I asked wonderingly, "because you care that much for Bob?"

"Sh! I haven't told him that yet."

It looked to me when I could see through my foolish old tears that she would never have to tell him. He was acting as if he had known it always.



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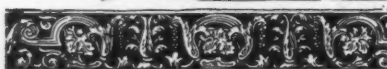
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## Overcoming Objections to Being Human

(Continued from page 76)

or mild forms of a given disease. If a man has a case of grippe and it does not cause him serious inconvenience, the doctor says he has a mild variety of it, and it has even been declared that slightly different breeds of standard germs are responsible for the different gradations of a disease. Different doctors have their own systems for sorting out these germs and tagging them, like different grades of coal. Even if one were to accept the germ theory, which has never been proved, it seems much more logical to say, when a man has a so-called mild attack of a disease, that he simply fell into intimate association with an ordinary, run-of-the-mine germ, of regulation size and stock, but was more able to resist it than his neighbor who met another germ of the same flock. Many doctors attribute more power to these microscopic little bugs than they do to the Almighty.

William Bullock, the great English pathologist, made protest against the idea that the problem of tuberculosis was merely one of infection. He recognized that the item of the bacillus itself was at the most *only one* factor. Practically everybody comes in contact with tubercular germs, but the question of having the disease or not depended, this authority insisted, in great measure on the disposition or power of the individual to resist it.

Dr. Pearl, in his Lowell lectures, advanced a theory about length of life and freedom from disease. It is that our inheritance of vitality is a little like our inheritance of a big fortune. It will last a long or short time according to how rapidly we spend it. If we live an ideal life from a health standpoint, in a congenial occupation that does not put too much strain upon us, and in healthful surroundings, such as on a farm, our vital patrimony will last longer than if we dwell in a city and devote ourselves to much eating, drinking, wild women, or any excess that goes with the so-called fast life. The same would be true of too exhausting an occupation. It stands to reason that if we conserve our vital resources they will last longer.

The race has been improving even without any form of enforced eugenics. If it were possible to have marriages only between those who have a high degree of resistance to physical ills, it seems probable that we might be able to develop a race with far greater capacity for long life than any now known. It is improbable, however, that any such thing will ever be accomplished, for, as Dr. Pearl recently pointed out in one of his lectures, to whom would we be willing to entrust the question of the kind of a race we should aim to produce? An ideal race from the point of view of one period might not be considered ideal a century or two later.

Another important factor in the health of people at the present time cannot well be disregarded. There is no getting away from the fact that one of the most important changes in the viewpoint of intelligent people in recent years has had to do with the growth of mental therapeutics. There is a growing belief that our thoughts affect our physical conditions and even our length of life. Our thoughts doubtless help us to adjust ourselves to meet the

needs of evolutionary processes. The medical profession has confirmed this to the extent of admitting that excitement, worry, hate and fear generate specific toxins which influence our health. Any doctor knows that it is not well to eat a heavy meal while under great stress or worry or fear. Yet, if one goes to a doctor suffering from indigestion brought on by doing that very thing, the doctor is likely to ask, "What have you been eating?" instead of, "What have you been thinking?"

The surprising thing is that with the great growth of faith in one form or another of mental therapeutics, members of the medical profession—those chiefly concerned with the maintaining of the health of the race—have used this method least. If one desires to have the best possible mental treatment for physical ills due to a mental condition, it is necessary to go outside of the medical profession. Incidentally, it may be mentioned, medical doctors have been active in fighting various other methods of treating ills, such as Christian Science, New Thought, osteopathy or chiropractic, which have thousands of adherents—people who are insistent that these methods have helped them when medical science failed. Medical men are willing to permit such methods of treatment subject only to the sanction of State boards, and they desire that these State boards shall be composed entirely of people of their own particular belief.

It is worth thinking about that in 1917 there was spent in this country in cities of 30,000 or more inhabitants, for the purpose of safeguarding and protecting the public health, the sum of \$120,000,000. Nobody begrudges or deplores so large an expenditure in the interest of public health. The significant fact is that all this expenditure was made under the control of one system of treatment, that is, the old line medical profession.

It was Robert G. Ingersoll, I believe, who said that if he were making a change in the scheme of things he would have health contagious instead of disease. When you come right down to brass tacks, health *is* contagious. Anybody knows that he feels better when surrounded by healthy energetic people than when thrown with those who do nothing but discuss illness and exchange symptoms.

If we admit that suggestion has merit, we must pause and wonder if much of the talk and propaganda regarding the terrors of tuberculosis, or cancer, does not do as much harm as good. When a man who has a half fear that he may be contracting a disease goes to a moving picture theater and sees depressing pictures of its ravages, may he not be plunged into it all the more rapidly?

For years and years it has been customary to implant fears in the minds of the people, especially growing children, to make them avoid certain practices which might undermine their health. Today there appears to be a growing belief even in the medical profession that these fears have done more harm in the long run than would have resulted from the practices themselves.

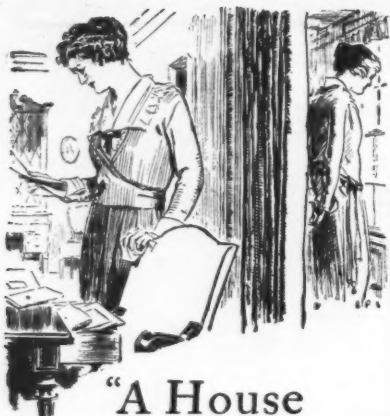
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He consulted his children regarding the making of his will and was persuaded by the younger daughter to name his son as executor and trustee.

Upon the father's death, the estate came into the son's hands. He became interested in a number of plans which required financing.

The older sister, becoming anxious about the safety of the estate, finally brought herself to demand an accounting from the brother by court order. It was found that the estate was almost hopelessly involved. All that was finally left was the old home—and there was but little to keep it going. The sisters still live in the same house, but they are strangers to each other.

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the medical profession has failed to accomplish much by the giving of pills and potions, nevertheless point to surgery and insist that the accomplishments in that field have been of a high order. This is probably at least partly true. Undoubtedly the average surgeon is many leagues in advance, scientifically, of his mere pill-administering associate. But even if we concede that surgery has benefited many individuals, it is a grave question if it has done much of lasting benefit to the race as a whole. Comparatively few people ever have occasion to submit to a surgical operation. It is not natural that they should.

Health is normal, and if we are obliged to go to surgeons it is because the means in common use for maintaining health have failed. But it must be conceded that along with whatever of benefit surgeons have accomplished, they have also done much harm.

Every observer knows that surgeons have a natural prejudice in favor of using a knife wherever there is any reasonable indication that an operation may perhaps be helpful. This prejudice is so strong in many instances that the result is a distressingly long list of operations that had better never have been performed. For a long time when appendicitis was at the height of its popularity, all manner of human ills were attributed to the appendix. Then tonsils and adenoids came more to the fore, and just recently it is to be observed that abscesses under teeth have the call.

I have in mind the case of a friend who consulted first one and then the other of two of the foremost diagnosticians in a large Eastern city. One recommended an operation and the other was equally insistent that an operation would be unwise. It is obvious that one of these men was wrong.

Frank B. Gilbreth, the efficiency engineer, who is probably the greatest living authority on human motions, and who has made motion studies of almost every pro-

fession and occupation, once told me that modern surgeons, considering their requirements and their opportunities, are the least efficient of any class of workers whose tasks require skill with their hands.

It seems improbable that the medical profession has on the whole done any harm. Sometimes I am even half-inclined to think that they have done some good. The encouragement and hope they have given the ailing, due to people's belief in them, no matter how faulty the methods, must be entered on the credit side.

Years ago a German doctor died and his papers fell into the hands of his coachman. The latter changed his name and came to a large city of the United States where he set up as a physician. With the doctor's papers in his possession the deception was easily possible. Not being familiar, however, with medicine, he never prescribed anything but sleep and buttermilk, in different-sized doses, according to how a case impressed him. He had a big vogue, and besides building up a lucrative practice, he had about the usual ratio of successful cures.

Many thousands of individuals would insist that they have received definite, tangible help from doctors. And it might be difficult to prove whether this help was real or imagined. But the question is not what has happened to individuals but to the race as a whole.

The only fair conclusion, taking the proposition by and large, seems to be that doctors have had little influence on mankind one way or the other. The indications are that we are just about where we would be if there were no practicing physicians.

Whatever the state of health of the human race, the answer is not doctors, or anybody else, but rests upon the ability of mankind to meet the demands of evolution. If human beings are healthy, generally speaking, it is because we have succeeded in getting adjusted to modern environment.

## Jeeves the Blighter

(Continued from page 81)

her shadow had been hanging over me, so to speak.

"Does she know? Already?"

"I gather that Sir Roderick has been speaking to her on the telephone, sir, and . . ."

"No wedding bells for me, what?"

Jeeves coughed.

"Mrs. Gregson did not actually confide in me, sir, but I fancy that some such thing may have occurred. She seemed, if I judged her correctly, decidedly agitated, sir."

It's a rummy thing, but I'd been so snootered by the old boy and the cats and the fish and the hat and the pink-faced chappie and all the rest of it that the bright side simply hadn't occurred to me till now. By Jove, it was like a bally great weight rolling off my chest. I gave a yelp of pure relief.

"Jeeves!" I said. "I believe you worked the whole thing."

"Sir?"

"I believe you had the jolly old situation in hand right from the start."

"Well, sir, Spenser, Mrs. Gregson's

butler, who inadvertently chanced to overhear something of your conversation when you were lunching at the house, did mention certain of the details to me; and I confess that, though it may be a liberty to say so, I entertained hopes that something might occur to prevent the match. I doubt if the young lady was entirely suitable to you, sir."

"And she would have shot you out on your ear five minutes after the fatal ceremony."

"Yes, sir. Spenser informed me that she had expressed some such intention . . . Mrs. Gregson wishes you to call upon her immediately, sir."

"She does, eh? What do you advise, Jeeves?"

"I think, under the circumstances, a trip to the south of France might prove enjoyable, sir."

"Jeeves," I said, "you are right, as always. Pack the old suitcase, and meet me at Victoria in time for the boat-train. I think that's the manly, independent course, what?"

"Absolutely, sir!" said Jeeves.



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Bob answered the summons to the Chief's office with just a little fear and trembling, for a lot of men were being dropped—a lot more were having their pay reduced.

But as Bob came in, his employer did a surprising thing. He got up quickly from his desk and grasped Bob warmly by the hand.

"I want to congratulate you, young man, on the marks you are making with the I. C. S. I am glad to see that you are training yourself not only for your present job but for the job ahead.

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## As Is

(Continued from page 65)

spoke his voice would be unresonant, somewhat lacking in authority. Yet the whole impression of his face and figure was pleasant enough. The face had even a kind of distinction what with its firm, slightly aquiline nose and its dull but deep brown eyes. The neatness which he had not known how to lend to Aunt Tilly's house he had expended on his person. He was shaved, washed; the coat in which he had sat down to his home-cooked meal was greaseless and brushed; though he had wrestled all that morning with the soil of the earth, his nails were neither broken nor stained.

It seemed now as though some of the fuels of passion left within him were alight again. As he sat with his eye along the driveway, his hands now and then clasped and unclasped and his eyes began to glow. With a sudden, almost violent shake of the shoulders, he rose, entered the house, took up a pipe from the mantel, dropped a shower of loose tobacco on Aunt Tilly's waxed floor as he filled it, let three matches go out before he lighted it. He gave only one puff before he laid it down to burn another brown spot on Aunt Tilly's mantel, strode to the kitchen, drank with unattractively eager gulps a glass of water, returned to his pipe, spoiled three more matches in relighting it, went back to his seat on the porch. He puffed violently, he clasped and unclasped his hands. Suddenly he rose, stood with his eyes fixed to the avenue of elms.

Up among their shadows was moving a spot, a very blob, of light blue. As he watched, it came out of the purple shade of the great wineglass elm which dominated all the rest. The figure walked with a gentle swaying of the hips—the figure was—his pipe dropped from his hands to smoke itself away in the grass. He took a step forward, then stepped back on the porch and simply waited.

That driveway, these two hundred and fifty years, had dramatized all the crises of his family. Down it an oxcart had carried the first of the Searles to his grave on Marlin Hill; up it had come the automobile hearse for the latest of the Searles to

die. Down it had strode a Searles carrying his flint-lock to the Indian wars; up it had marched the buff-clad courier of the Continental army to say that another Searles had fallen at Saratoga. Down it had rolled a sailor boy to fight on the "Chesapeake;" up it had plodded a weary veteran fresh from Appomattox. The doctor's saddle horse, later the doctor's carriage—brides on pillions, in shays, in surreys, in buckboards—that road had made a pageant of the commonplace Searles history.

Of none of this did he think—he, the last of the Searles. He only knew that the figure in blue, coming so lightly and so swiftly, brought destiny; and somehow he preferred to wait rather than go forth to meet it.

As she drew nearer, he saw that her head was bowed as though in meditation, so that he could not see her features under her broad white hat. She was on the gravel walk now, and still she did not raise her face. Not until she stood at the very edge of the porch did she look up, meet his eye. Then he realized that she knew he was there all along. But her expression held him momentarily rooted in place. He had seen many changes on that face, so fondly remembered in all his years of absence; some of them he disliked to recall, for they plowed the sodden fields of remorse. But he had never seen her like this before—calm, serene even to holiness; yet warmly a woman, too. Her lips, usually so delicately pink, were cherry-red; her eyes were like two jewels at the bottom of a sunlit stream. She stood with her hands clasped before her, just looking upon him. Motion came to him all of a sudden. He stepped forward. But her hands came apart with a gesture of arrest; they seemed to command him neither to move nor to speak. Then he saw that she was struggling for words.

"I just came up, Bob," she said at length, "to say—I guess we'd better take hold of this farm—you and I."

She paused; he moved again, and again her hands commanded him. "You see—I calculate—it's about time—I began to live."

## Entirely Reasonable

(Continued from page 48)

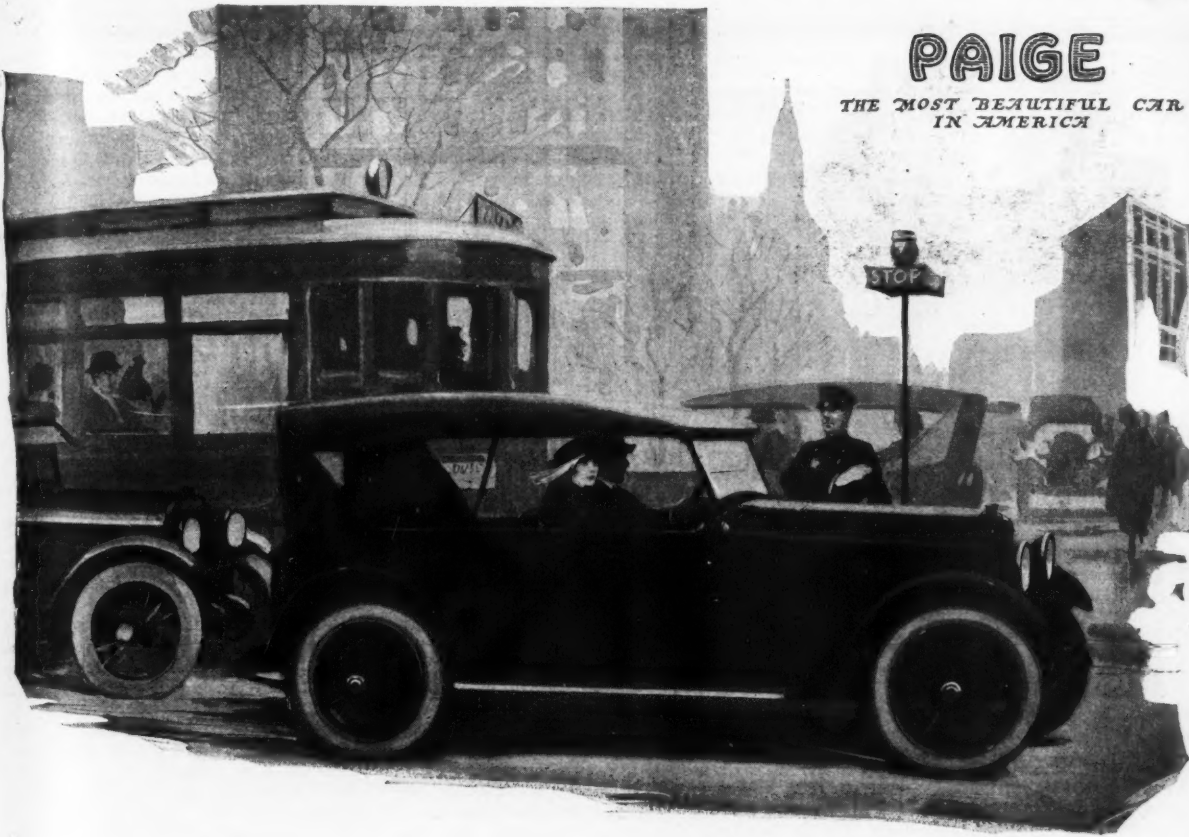
breakfast was of the highest sumptuousness, like the bridal dress. The ceremony took place at St. George's, Hanover Square, and the red cloth was laid on the pavement for it and the awning erected above the red cloth, and the usual crowd gathered and was universally disappointed by the fewness of the party.

After the register was signed, Minnie kissed her father, thus thoughtfully saving him the agony of making the first move to kiss her. The touch of her lips on his raspy cheek affected him rather disconcertingly. She was very mysterious to him in that moment—not like his familiar daughter, but like a woman strange, exquisite, and incomprehensible, and it seemed a monstrous and barbaric thing that Captain Coggleshall should whisk away this delicate and sensitive creature into some withdrawn

secrecy and call her his own. Fortunately the queer sensation lingered no more than a moment in Mr. Jack Hollins's soul. In another moment Mr. Jack Hollins was himself again.

He presented to the pair a small house in select Hill Street, together with two thousand pounds for furnishing, and he paid in advance the first half-yearly instalment of the promised five thousand a year. In short he behaved with an old-fashioned grandiosity, and his satisfaction in doing so was much enhanced by the certitude of his conviction that the Coggleshalls were as poor as church mice and that if he chose he could eat up the Coggleshalls and Coggleshall Haigh (their place), and all that was theirs, without having indigestion. The prospect of living alone in Carlos Place did not in the least affright him.





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## II

STILL, he went away for four months, reaching Pará and then doing a farther thousand miles or so up the Amazon. He wrote no letters except business letters, so that Samuels was the only person to be advised of his return. On the morning after his arrival he had the idea of strolling round to Hill Street, to see how his daughter had been getting along with a husband who was captain in the First Lifeguards. The color of the front door of the Coggles-hall house annoyed him very much. It was a brilliant uncompromising vermilion. As he had never wandered about Chelsea, this was the first vermilion front door in his experience. Not the color itself but the fantastic public silliness of the thing vexed him. He noticed, moreover, that the blinds and curtains of the house were a challenge to the conventions of British domesticity. A parlormaid, dressed like no other parlormaid within his memory, opened to him.

"Mrs. Coggleshall in?" said he, and stepped forward in the firm fashion of a broker's man who must not stand on ceremony in order to effect an entrance. He had a faint hope that the maid might reply, "Her ladyship is at home." But he was disappointed; Sir Maurice had not expired during his absence, and Minnie had not yet come into a title.

He told the maid fiercely who he was, and she led him into a room which, like the front door, aroused his angry contempt. The door of it was black, and the doorcase pale blue. The walls were not papered but palely distempered. The scanty furniture was painted in strange tints, and there was not a bit of mahogany or oak anywhere. The fireplace was draped in slaty silk. The lower half of the walls was covered with paintings and drawings and prints, whose subjects were, in his opinion, either incomprehensible, or idiotic, or indecent, and most of which had the air of having been daubed by humorous children. He could better have withstood these tasteless jokes had they been respectably and stoutly framed in English gold; but very few of them were framed at all. The cushions, which abounded, seemed to have been borrowed from a pantomime. On the mantelpiece was a whole row of unprecedented dolls. Disorder was everywhere.

Minnie came into the room, not hurrying, but moving rather more quickly than usual. There was a look on her face such as he had never seen there; she was Marmion's wife. All her physique had altered, and for the better. In fact she would have been a magnificent spectacle but for the huge ugly apron that she was wearing, which apron covered her from neck to ankle.

"Well, Father," she greeted him tranquilly, as if she had talked with him last on the previous evening. "How are you?" She shook hands, did not kiss. "We were both up in the studio painting. Quaggy will be down in a minute."

"Quaggy?" demanded Mr. Jack Hollins. "Who's he?"

"It's what I call Marmion now. I made it up."

He had left this girl sane. He had given this girl the house and two thousand for furnishing it. Such furniture as he had described could not have cost more than

about fifteen shillings. He was also allowing this girl five thousand a year.

Then the husband appeared, in a brown velvetene coat and a necktie that might have been ripped off a cushion cover. He had decidedly put on weight, but did not seem to be in very good condition. The perfection of his social manner, however, was unimpaired. Ignoring Mr. Jack Hollins's irritated tactiturnity, he talked at ease of the Amazon and the Booth line of steamers and of similar matters suitable to the comprehension of a father-in-law. And as he talked, Minnie, with shining eyes happy and absent-minded, stroked his velvetene shoulders at intervals in adoration. Oh! He was decidedly at peace with his world, was Marmion.

"You must see the rest of the house, Father," said Minnie.

"Well, if you want to know," said Mr. Jack Hollins, after the agitating tour of inspection (the double drawing room had been turned into two studios), "Well, if you want to know, I don't like it, and that's flat."

"No," observed Marmion, with a benignant placidity, "we feared it might hurt your finer susceptibilities."

Jackanapes! The fellow was laughing at his father-in-law! Mr. Hollins was furious, but he controlled himself. He declined to stay to lunch, partly because of his general resentment, and partly because he detested the dining table, which was ridiculously narrow and painted in a most offensive orange tint. Marmion very courteously regretted Mr. Hollins's inability to lunch. He passed his elegant hand across his forehead, and Minnie exclaiming that Quaggy suffered too much from neuralgia, started on the disquieting subject of his health.

Mr. Hollins had a lancinating quail: "If he dies before the old baronet, my daughter will never be her ladyship."

Then Minnie referred, apparently quite incidentally, to the fact that Quaggy had decided to resign his commission in the First Lifeguards, so that he might have more leisure for painting. This was precisely the straw that broke the back of Mr. Jack Hollins's temper. The veins on his neck became manifest. And as her father began to lay about him, Minnie was reminded of the terrible humiliations her mother had suffered in the past. She blushed for her father, but she left the situation for her husband to handle. Mr. Hollins both ramped and raved. He would have his way. His son-in-law was largely dependent upon him, and his son-in-law should not resign his commission. He didn't mind his son-in-law playing at art, but he would absolutely not permit him to be a professional painter. No! Let him understand that once for all! Mr. Jack Hollins's daughter was not going to be the wife of a professional painter. If Marmion resigned his commission, he then, no doubt, would relinquish physical exercise entirely, and in all probability would die and the title would lapse. A pretty thing!

"What does your father say to this senseless scheme?" demanded Mr. Hollins.

"Well, my father objects to it in much the same style as you do," answered Marmion blandly, and in his tone Mr. Hollins surmised an infuriating irony. . . . You never knew how to take the fellow.

"I should think he did object!" Mr.

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Hollins cried. "Anybody would who wasn't a damned fool!"

At these words Marmion walked slowly to the window and looked out.

"Anyhow," Mr. Hollins finished, "you let me hear from you tomorrow morning that you've changed your mind, or else—"

"Yes?" said Marmion, turning his head.

"Or else not another penny of my money will come into this house. You can bet your life on that. I've got my daughter's interests to think of."

"Mr. Hollins," said Marmion, looking out into the street again, "forgive me for saying so, but it occurs to me that you are presuming a little on your position as my wife's father in this house. And may I add it's not your commission I'm going to resign, it's my own."

Mr. Hollins made the worst of his way out, and nobody accompanied him to the vermilion front door.

### III

His state of mind can only be described as one of exasperated fury. The reasons for the fury were lost in the fury itself. Mr. Jack Hollins had ceased to be rational. Samuels had immediate cause to learn his master's condition. The next morning no letter came either from Marmion or Minnie. Mr. Hollins had feared that there would be no letter, and yet he was amazed at the defiance. These two persons, who had absolutely no weapons, were nevertheless defying him. He could not understand it. The thing was scarcely conceivable. He had never been defied before. All the ruthlessness of the brother of the man who had defied nature herself and damned the consequences, came into play.

And Mr. Hollins had an original and brilliant idea. He called up Mr. Shelton Shelton, philanthropic giver of clinics, on the telephone. Mr. Shelton Shelton, being a very important person indeed, was not easy to get at, even on the telephone. But Mr. Hollins, perhaps by the help of the ruthlessness in his voice, got at him, and, explaining that he desired an interview about a philanthropic scheme of magnitude, obtained an appointment for the next day. The appointment was confirmed by a secretary's letter.

The next day, there being no sign of any sort from the house with the vermilion door, Mr. Hollins kept the appointment. He had to wait for nearly a quarter of an hour in the antechambers of Mr. Shelton Shelton; which annoyed him considerably. Mr. Shelton Shelton received Mr. Jack Hollins, somewhat nonchalantly, in a magnificently furnished private office. He was a short, thin man, with a shiny red complexion, an oily insinuating voice, a short pointed white beard, a frock coat, and the habit of joining his hands at the tips of his fingers. Mr. Jack Hollins thought he resembled a revivalist preacher or a money lender's tout much more than a renowned philanthropist; but he admitted at the first glance that Mr. Shelton Shelton must be an exceedingly clever and wary man. He was the least bit afraid lest the philanthropist might in some unimaginable way get the better of him.

"Please do accept my apologies for keeping you waiting, my dear Mr. Hollins,"

began Mr. Shelton Shelton, his hand folding like a snake round the hand of Mr. Hollins. "I hope I needn't tell you that circumstances were too much for me. They often are, alas! Do sit down. I am delighted to meet a director of the Midlands Cooked Food Company, which has done so much to cater honestly for our impoverished middle classes." And so on.

Mr. Hollins soon perceived that Mr. Shelton Shelton had learned a good deal about him. And after Mr. Hollins had mumbled something Mr. Shelton Shelton went on again:

"I feel sure you'll understand if I ask you at this first interview to state your case as briefly as possible. My day has been deranged. I have an appointment with the Countess of Alcar in a quarter of an hour, and another with the First Secretary of the American Embassy in an hour from now."

"I can state my case in five minutes, not fifteen, Mr. Shelton Shelton," said Mr. Jack Hollins firmly. "I'm like yourself, a rich man." Mr. Shelton Shelton nodded approvingly. "I've got nothing to do with my money. No family, except one daughter who's married and settled. I've no vices, and few pleasures, and so I don't spend my money. I want to do something with it, something useful. I particularly don't want to leave it behind me."

"Ah! Very good! Very good! I wish there were more rich men of your kidney, Mr. Hollins. You need advice, and you've come to me?"

"Don't run along quite so fast!" said Mr. Hollins in his soul to Mr. Shelton Shelton; and aloud: "It occurred to me that a gentleman of your experience might be able and willing to give me a few tips. A nod's as good as a wink to me, and I wouldn't care to bother you. I can paddle my own canoe, but any advice from somebody like yourself would be appreciated."

"Pray don't apologize. Pray do not apologize. I am entirely at your service. I'm at the service of humanity. Everybody in England knows that. Unfortunately there is no lack of charitable objects which you could devote yourself to. No lack! Personally I do what I can, as possibly you may have heard. But it's so little. So little!"

At this point Mr. Hollins was startled to see tears in the eyes of Mr. Shelton Shelton. He thought at first that he must be mistaken, but when two drops rolled down the wrinkled red cheeks of Mr. Shelton Shelton he knew that he was not mistaken. The tears inspired Mr. Hollins with disgust. He feared and detested Mr. Shelton Shelton, and he would have departed, but for his resolve to pick Mr. Shelton Shelton's brain if possible. He wanted to avoid making a public fool of himself as a philanthropist, and would neglect no precaution to that end.

In such wise did these two determined benefactors hobnob together, without even a cigarette to help them—Mr. Shelton Shelton being a person of the most austere principles—for the welfare of the multitudinous bottom dog.

"Before we go any further," said Mr. Shelton Shelton, "can you furnish me with any estimate of the sum which you have in mind to employ on your proposed scheme? The choice of the scheme would obviously be influenced by the sum at disposal."

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"Half a million, to commence with," answered Mr. Hollins succinctly.

Mr. Shelton Shelton glanced first at the clock and then at his watch.

"You must let me think it over, Mr. Hollins," said he. "You must let me think it over. The sum is not inconsiderable—and may I say how deeply I admire your simplicity and your public spirit? I will think it over and write you in a few days." He rang a bell. By some magic means Mr. Hollins found himself expeditiously in the street, and the novel idea presented itself to him that he was not the only strong and ruthless man on the face of the earth.

#### IV

SEVERAL days later, about six o'clock in the evening, Minnie called to see her father. Samuels, when he opened the door, raised his eyebrows and gave the slightest lift of his head—as if to indicate that the tyrant was above and in a highly explosive condition. No butler could have been at once more discreet and more informative. Samuels looked at his former mistress and fellow slave and admired her greatly. Yes! Marriage had improved her and made her a magnificent spectacle.

"Good afternoon, Father," she said in the drawing room. The old gentleman was seated by the fire.

"What do you want?"

"I just looked in to see how you were getting on."

"Has Marmion resigned his commission?"

"Yes." Minnie sat down, taking off her gloves, and Mr. Hollins jumped up.

"Oh! He has, has he?" Mr. Hollins cried, raucously.

He gazed at his daughter, rabid and puzzled. The blow had fallen. He was definitely and uncompromisingly defied. There had been no parleying, no attempting of any sort to placate him. He examined, as well as he could in his extreme excitement, Minnie's placid and already half-maternal face. She and her husband were ready to sacrifice five thousand a year and perhaps also the relatively trifling sums received from Sir Maurice, in order to prove their independence of him. They were facing poverty, for themselves and their children, to that same end. It was incomprehensible. There must be something, there must be a good deal of himself in that young woman who he realized had always baffled him even when he had humiliated and tortured her and forced her to obey him. In her own way she must be as ruthless as he was... Ah! But he would be ruthless. He would be ruthless as never before. He simply could not bear being defied. The trouble was not now that Marmion had resigned his commission—it was that Marmion and Minnie had defied him.

"You wait!" he said, with terrible contained bitterness, and hastened to his bedroom drawing a bunch of keys from his pocket as he went. His safe was in the bedroom. He returned with his will. It was not a very long document. He opened it and beat it out with his open palm.

"You see that!" he said. "That meant fifty thousand a year to you. It will mean nothing in a minute because I am going to burn it. I'm going to give away most of

## Cosmopolitan for April, 1922

what I have while I'm alive, and what's left'll go to charity by a new will!" He kept on slapping the page and crying: "Look at it! Read it! Look at it!"

Just then Samuels came in with a letter that had arrived by the six o'clock delivery. Recognizing the envelope, Mr. Jack Hollins snatched at it, dropping the will.

The letter was, as he surmised, from Mr. Shelton Shelton. He was intending to show it to Minnie as a further proof of his plans. But it was as follows:

My dear Mr. Hollins: Adverting to our very interesting and agreeable interview, I cannot tell you how profoundly I appreciate your desire to give me so large a sum as half a million pounds to help forward my philanthropic schemes. It is a mark of confidence such as even I have seldom received, and encourages me to continue energetically in my life's work. If you will call tomorrow at about four I will explain to you in some detail how I propose to employ your munificent donation, and perhaps at the same time you will indicate what arrangements you are making for the transfer of the necessary stocks or other securities. Believe me, my dear Mr. Hollins, very cordially yours,  
I. SHELTON SHELTON.

The recipient of the letter gasped, tried to speak, and could not, stamped his feet violently, crunched the letter into a ball, and threw it into the fire and the envelope after it.

The sight of his speechless rage was appalling—so much so that Minnie lost her calm and exclaimed in protest:

"Father!"

She had never seen anything like it. The old man's face violently twitching, seemed to puff up; the veins of his neck, overcharged with blood at terrific pressure, stood out like raised seams; his breathing was stertorous; his eyes rolled. The continued violent efforts to relieve his emotion by articulation racked his obese frame, producing such exhaustion that he fell at last into the easy chair and his head sank to one side against the flap. Minnie knelt down to him and perceived that he had been drinking whisky. She rang the bell, and then, as there was no immediate answer, ran out on to the landing.

"Samuels! Samuels! Father is taken ill. I think he's had an apoplectic stroke. Telephone for the doctor." Her voice seemed to resound through the house and she heard responsive feet hurrying, and noises from the basement.

When she returned to him Mr. Hollins's forehead had gone white, and his hands were blue. She tried to straighten the twisted right leg; it was as heavy as lead. He was unconscious, and he was paralyzed. Half an hour later, and a few seconds after the doctor entered, Mr. Hollins died. The enormous impudence and vanity of the great philanthropist had killed him. Not for another hour did Marmion arrive. Mr. Hollins was then stretched on his bed decently and in order. The lights had been extinguished in the big drawing room.

"Quaggy!" murmured Minnie, and burst into tears. There was no sobbing, and the tears passed like a brief summer shower; but Marmion had never seen her



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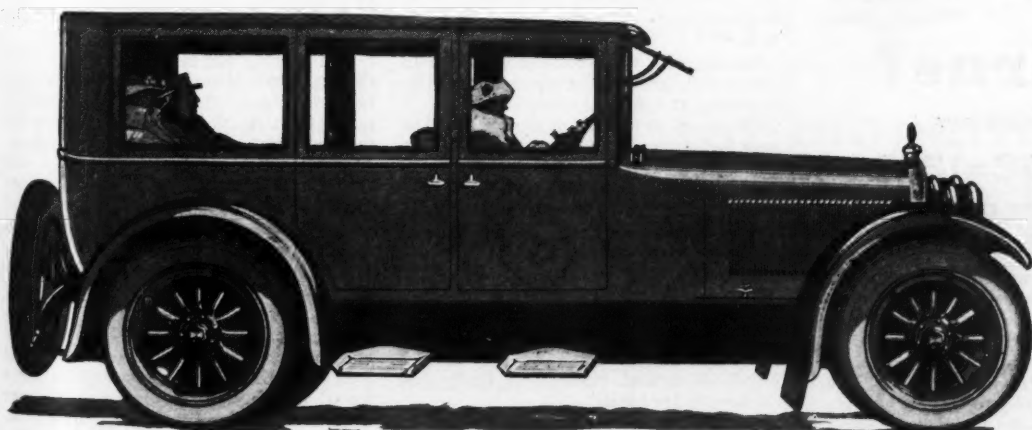
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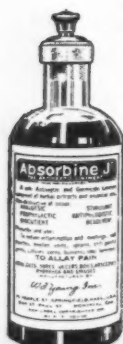
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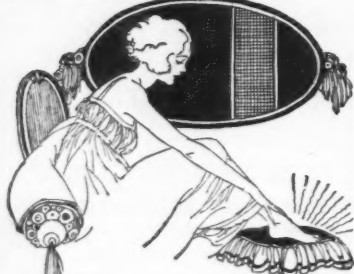
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cry before, and nobody in the house had seen her cry before. He held her gently. She was stricken with grief for the terrible old man, beaten as it were at the post of destiny. But for the chance coming of a letter at a certain moment, he might have laid waste her whole life. Yet the foolish creature, ordinarily so wise, could feel acutely the pathos of the dramatic defeat of Mr. Hollins's demoniacal ruthlessness. It was tragic that he could not win. She wondered what the burnt letter could have contained.

"All this is very dangerous for you, my dear," said her husband. "Come away!" She controlled herself.

## The Man Who Married His Own Wife

(Continued from page 37)

he got up in the morning with no sign of fatigue on him and prepared for his first day in his new rôle in San Francisco.

He met many of his old acquaintances and discovered them ready to receive him cordially without ever a suspicion that he was Thomas Morton. That afternoon he went to a tea and was warmly welcomed.

"You are one of the old O'Haras," his hostess said simply. The tone conveyed to him more than he had imagined possible a change both in his own attitude and in that of the world towards him.

In the evening he went to a dinner. He looked vainly for the one woman he sought. The house was one at which she was familiar. He learned later that she had been unable to come because of another engagement.

"But you must meet her," his hostess of the evening told him casually. "She is charming always. We like to have our New York men have the pleasure of finding such a treasure among us."

He was now aware how little real knowledge he had had of Elsie. Hitherto he had counted upon her liking for the fineness of living for society, freedom from common cares, for men who had learned the sophistication and simplicity of existence—men like Freddie Needham. But from what people said, from the thousand small things let fall in conversation, she was building up another personality than the one he had known as his wife. Who would this new and strange woman prove to be?

He spent his next morning busily about affairs and called at the offices of the Blue Star Line at half after eleven.

He gazed at Needham curiously. The year had altered him enormously, and for the worse. The old easiness of manner and grace of gesture were departed. The general manager of the Blue Star Line looked like a man much worried, almost at his wits' end.

"I am here as the representative of the Atlantic Trading Company, Mr. Needham," Marsden said pleasantly.

"I understood sometime ago that your company wanted some of our trade," Needham replied curtly. "I fancy you are here to try for it."

"I rather expected to reach some friendly arrangement," Marsden admitted quietly. "You know we have certain things to offer in return for anything we ask."

Needham looked at his caller swiftly and changed his manner.

Cosmopolitan for April, 1922

"What's that paper you've got?" she asked murmuringly.

"It's the will."

She turned in obedience from the bed, realizing the wisdom of her husband's advice. The thought of the vast responsibility of great riches and of her future rôle solemnized her, and she leaned softly on Marmion. He closed the door on the poor remains of the formidable and ineffectual Juggernaut.

"Poor old chap!" muttered Marmion; for he could admire the heroic even in savagery; and he was one of those simple ones who remember that we are all heaven's creatures.

"Of course. But you will want time to look around you. No hurry, is there?"

Marsden recognized the attitude of a man not ready to listen to argument, and shifted his ground. They chatted for a little. Casually O'Hara let the remark fall, "I'm dining with the Sherwoods to-night."

"Nice people," Needham said cordially.

"And I believe I'm to have the honor of tea at Mrs. Morton's this afternoon," Marsden added. "I found a note this morning from her. Some of my family wrote her, I think." He saw the faint flush on Needham's cheek and went deliberately on: "I hear she is not only most charming but very clever."

"She is the chief owner of this line," Needham said, as if against his will.

"But takes no active interest?" O'Hara insisted.

Freddie Needham blinked a little. He seemed unprepared to answer this, and Marsden soon took his leave.

His lips were grimly set as he left the office. But he presently smiled. His next errand was a peculiar one.

He found Judge Lawrence in his shabby office in a downtown quarter. He laid his card on the old attorney's desk. Lawrence stared down at the "O'Hara Marsden" on it, then at his caller.

"You didn't have the nerve to stay away," he remarked in a perfectly matter of fact voice.

"You know me?" Marsden said, in astonishment.

"Of course," the lawyer returned. "In the first place, it was I who identified that body as yours. In the second place, I traced you to New York." He put his fingers tips together and gazed soberly at Marsden. "Certainly I know you." He leaned forward suddenly and tapped Marsden on the knee. "I have kept your secret. Thomas Morton is dead. Needham has pretty nearly smashed the line you built up so masterfully. But who is going to marry his widow?"

Presently Marsden spoke:

"I came here today to ask your mercy and make a confession. You know what I was and that I had the strength to give up what was never really mine. I have come back to discover whether I have another chance. But unless it is for Mrs. Morton's happiness I shan't attempt to win back my own happiness, dear as it is to me. And I have every winning card in my hand—control of the Blue Star

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Certainly it is unprofitable to buy on a falling market. Every indication, however, points to a stabilized market this spring.

But whether you get a new car, or continue to use the old one, we want you to depend on Cosmopolitan's Motoring Service Department for authoritative motoring information.

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Line if I wish, a social place, brains, education."

The judge blinked owlishly. "You are in love," he remarked. Presently he added, "With a woman you don't know."

"I mean to say," O'Hara went on firmly "that if I suspect that she will not find happiness with me, I shall go away. This time, you understand, there will be no bond between us to harass her or warp her judgment—no question of what some folks might call duty."

"You are a stranger," Lawrence admitted. "No one but me would know you for what you were one time. Your face is that of a man who has lived successfully and neatly; your voice is trained; you are, pardon me, a gentleman. Yet you will not succeed."

"Why?" came the sharp demand. "Is she—is she in love with Needham—with somebody else?"

"Not that I know of," the judge answered. "But no art can alter the inward soul of a man. Love is a matter intimate and delicate. It has indefeasible rights. One of these is to seek love. Elsie Haynes, you tell me, fell out of love with Thomas Morton." He laughed suddenly and harshly. "You need not expect her to find love again in O'Hara Marsden, for something within her will rebel, will overcome all the attractions you offer, make a fool of you."

"I go to tea with her this afternoon," Marsden said quietly.

Lawrence raised his dim eyes to the younger man's.

He roused himself apparently with an effort, rose and said in a different tone than he had used, "What luck! To have a second chance!"

At half past four that afternoon O'Hara Marsden entered the doorway of what had once been his home. A maid long in Mrs. Morton's service received him impassively. He drew a long breath. For an instant he had feared recognition. He passed on into the drawing room. It was unaltered. A girlish figure rose to greet him and his heart drove the blood madly to his head. Elsie was smiling at him and holding out her hand.

"I am so glad to meet one who is a friend of so many of my friends," she said.

Marsden controlled himself and responded with proper appreciation. Presently they were seated before the fire.

"It was nice of you to welcome me to San Francisco," he told her. "I fancy Nannie Stanwood wrote you, didn't she—my cousin?"

"Yes," Elsie replied. She glanced at him with a slight frown. "Somehow—you know how it happens at times—it seems as if you were an old friend."

She sighed faintly.

"I'm flattered," he responded gravely.

"I hope the feeling may become a fact." Outwardly calm, he listened to her chitter chatter with a new sense of the mystery that lies back of the allure of a fine woman. Something more than a year ago this delicate person had been his wife; he had thought to know her well, to be acquainted with her ways of thinking, her desires, her impulses, her wilfulnesses. It was because of this supposed knowledge and experience of her that he had made the grand gesture of endowing her with his wealth and vanishing. But she was a stranger.

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"I'm really a business man," he told her. "And, by the way, I met Mr. Needham. Just who is he?"

"A very old friend of mine," she replied. She added, with a little smile, "I leave all my affairs in his hands."

Marsden nodded. "I'm glad to hear that. I like to know just who I'm dealing with."

He saw a flicker of dread in her eyes, instantly veiled. "You aren't thinking of doing anything very terrible to us, are you, Mr. Marsden?"

He shook his head laughingly, but he knew that Freddie Needham had warned her against him, for some unknown reason. He hated Needham.

Later he lighted a cigarette and unthinkingly thrust the burnt match stick into the damp earth of a flowerpot.

Elsie almost rose from her chair, then sank back. He caught the glance of pure bewilderment on her face. She excused herself by a murmured, "My husband used to do that."

"Did you—do you object?" he forced himself to ask indifferently. But it put him more strictly on his guard, and he resumed the light chat he had been enjoying so much, reveling in the sense of the actual pleasure Elsie was getting from his presence. In due time he rose to take his leave, asking whether he might not come again.

"Just ring me up," she responded, holding out her slim hand to him. "I'm almost always at home."

With a shy gesture she indicated the half mourning she wore. He bowed, with a fresh thrill at his heart, and went away. It was almost seven o'clock before he recalled that he had a dinner engagement with the Sherwoods, people always of Elsie's set and rather exclusive.

There he listened to much gossip. The Sherwoods were discreetly but frankly disgusted with Freddie Needham. Mrs. Sherwood, nibbling a sweet, confided to Marsden that Freddie was a bore.

"He used to be underfoot," she told him, "and all of us played about with him, don't you know? So long as he was just Freddie Needham, with a small income and nothing to do, it didn't matter. But when Tom Morton was drowned and Elsie turned over the Blue Star Line to him, it seemed to most of us that Freddie didn't show his best. One likes a business man to play up, you know."

"I've met him," Marsden acknowledged. "I thought him rather clever. Mrs. Morton told me she quite left everything to him."

"The greater fool she," Mrs. Sherwood remarked. "Freddie is not the man. But, anyway, we're sure now she'll never marry him. Maybe it's worth the price."

O'Hara smiled amicably. "Was there talk?"

"Only a little—pure nonsense. Tom Morton was a rough kind of man and he despised Freddie. Naturally, Elsie took Freddie up. But she's let him alone pretty much ever since."

When he met Elsie the second time it was in Needham's office. As he entered he saw that they had been disagreeing about something; Needham's face was white and Elsie's flushed. They were evidently relieved to have him interrupt their conference, and welcomed him warmly. But O'Hara Marsden had grown



## When the Tinker Came Along

THERE was a hole in your mother's dishpan. How was it to be mended? One day Citizen Fix-it, carrying his battered fire-pot, with its bed of glowing coals, knocked at the back door.

You and your playmates watched him, fascinated, as he drew his iron hot from the coals, and melted the end of his bar of solder. He rubbed the molten solder over the pan, and presto! the hole was gone.

Every day you live, solder figures in your life. When you turn a faucet, the water runs through pipes whose joints have been made water-tight with solder. The tins of fruit, meat, salmon and vegetables opened in your kitchen are sealed with solder. So are the tubes in the radiator of your automobile. Solder closes the joints of tin roofs, gutters, and leaders.

Solder is a product of lead. Good solder is made of pure lead and pure tin, alloyed in the right proportions.

Countless other products of lead add to the comfort and convenience of your daily life—very often without your knowing it.

Consider your automobile, for instance. Besides the lead in the solder of the radiator, there is lead in the battery, in the bearings, in the glass of the headlight lenses, in the rubber of the tires, in the paint, and in the rubber mat on the step.

There are many other important uses of lead, in the arts and industries of civiliza-

tion, and the most important of all is the use of white-lead as the principal factor in good paint.

The more white-lead any paint contains, the greater its protective power and its durability. Painters commonly use what they call "lead-and-oil" for all their outdoor work. This is simply pure white-lead, thinned by adding pure linseed oil. This paint is famous for its staying qualities and the long life it gives to the surfaces it covers.

The importance of paint-protection is just beginning to be generally understood. People are learning that a general heading of the maxim, "Save the Surface and You Save All," will mean the conservation of millions of dollars yearly in property values. Unpainted or poorly painted surfaces decay—a surface painted with a good white-lead paint remains whole and sound.

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to hate Needham, because he had made Elsie suffer the dread of heavy loss. So he was chilly towards him, made a point of postponing business and asked Mrs. Morton rather abruptly if he could drive her home.

She assented coolly, and when they were well up Market Street, said, "I wish you would be more civil to Mr. Needham."

Without a word O'Hara turned the car countrywards. For an hour they simply drifted on through the scenes so familiar to them both. But they said little. She had accepted his unspoken offer of a drive and at five he brought her back to her own house.

"Come in and I'll make you a cup of tea," she told him in her gentle, tired voice.

Again he had a queer sense of having lived the very scene over before. They said little to each other but he knew she felt comforted and pleased. She asked him to dine with her the next night.

"I'll have a few people I want you to meet," she told him.

The dinner proved larger than he had expected. Alice Sherwood was there, gossip and voluble, accompanied by a husband none too brilliant, but whom Marsden liked. Others filled in; pretty, vivacious women and clever men.

O'Hara found himself safe at last. These were the people he had known of old, yet there was no hint in voice or gesture or manner that he was suspected to be anything but what he professed to be—a New Yorker established in his own city and keen to enjoy the life offered him in another. He had the satisfaction, also, that he could dominate these kindly and courteous, smart folk; they smiled on him, listened to him.

The conversation turned at last to ships, and Mrs. Morton subtly suggested that she left such matters to Needham.

"It's a funny thing, Freddie, you picked up the business so quickly," said Mrs. Sherwood. "You never appeared interested in anything before."

Needham laughed. "I was always intrigued by business," he replied.

"But you loved pleasure so!"

"I have combined it with business," he said. "Running a line of ships is amusing."

"You run ships, too, don't you?" asked Alice of Marsden.

He nodded gravely. "My family has always run a line," he remarked. "My great-grandfather and my grandfather and my father were as much at home on a quarterdeck as in a drawing room. I went to sea myself on one of our clippers."

Elsie Morton laughed, color high in her cheeks. "There we have it," she said in her low, perfectly controlled voice. "Mr. Marsden is in the shipping business because his family always has been. Freddie never knew what a ship was for, save to fetch and carry for him, till he took charge of the Blue Star Line. Yet you both are successes."

Marsden smiled at her. "That is true, Mrs. Morton."

Alice Sherwood interrupted with one of her shrewd criticisms: "Yet after all, a ship is really a ship only at sea. I'll warrant Mr. Marsden is more at home in midocean than Freddie could be."

"Possibly," O'Hara responded carelessly. "But one is silly to take the trouble of actually learning seamanship unless



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one is going to be a skipper. I missed a lot by being sent off when I was a youngster. I never got the college education I should have, and I'm still a little awkward when there's no work to do."

Elsie met his calm gaze. "When there's no work to do," she repeated slowly. "I think a good many men well worth while are unappreciated for that reason. They don't show their best qualities when it is merely an affair of leisure or pleasure."

Later O'Hara found himself drawn aside by Elsie. They talked books and music and art a while. He found her extremely well read. She had met people whom he knew to be the best, and dimly recalled that during his marriage they had been brought to his notice; that Elsie had urged him to make acquaintance with them. Now, little as he really knew, he realized that Elsie had a genuine, practical interest in such things; they were part of her life, a part he had ignored, demanding that she pay all attention to his affairs. He found himself suddenly embarrassed. He flinched when his hostess asked softly, "Did you know my husband, Captain Morton?"

"Yes," he told her constrainedly.

"He was a big man," she said cordially.

"He first went to sea in one of my grandfather's ships," O'Hara went on, recovering himself. "He was one of the best skippers ever. He liked the sea. He left it with regret."

"With regret?" Elsie asked coldly.

"I mean in a business way," Marsden responded promptly. "Of course I knew very little about him, except when he became a power through working up the Blue Star Line." Then he added in a casual way: "He was a distant connection. I believe he didn't acknowledge it, possibly thought it not worth while."

Needham came up at this moment and asked Elsie for a word. They talked earnestly, and Marsden saw again that passing glance of dread on her face. She came back to him with pretty apologies. "Business is so bothersome," she said.

"Ships are always at sea," he responded. "But you oughtn't to be bothered, if I may say so."

"You don't like Mr. Needham," she said abruptly.

He tried to conceal his confusion. "I hope I haven't been so rude."

"You are forgiven," she said quietly. "It was only a silly notion of mine. You know, I'm trying to run my line as my husband would have run it—and I don't succeed. He was so bold, so adventurous. Risks never worried him. He seemed to defy the world."

Marsden's heart leaped, but he replied calmly, "I can understand why he was heart and soul in his work." He emphasized his meaning with a glance steady and direct. Elsie flushed. He went on, "Too bad he failed in his great ambition."

"I don't think he ever confided that to me," she answered with unexpected bitterness, which he knew she instantly regretted.

As he walked down to his hotel Marsden thought hard and fast. He knew exactly what it was that was worrying Elsie, and he knew that Needham, in an attempt to save himself, had risked the Blue Star Line and Elsie's fortune. At midnight he sent a long telegram to his grandfather. In the morning the reply came, curt and specific:



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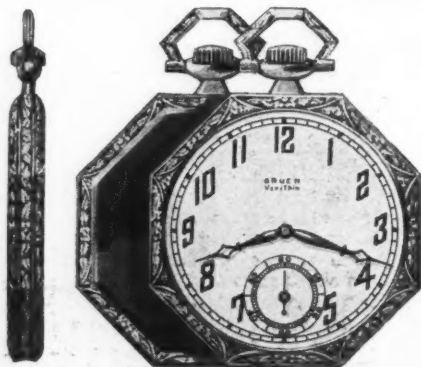
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Freddie Needham was hardly seated in his office before O'Hara Marsden was announced. The two men met with assumed cordiality. Then Marsden quietly, firmly and definitely stated his business.

Needham's face went gray. He did not even attempt to defend himself, to make terms for himself and his company.

"To put it brutally," Marsden concluded, "you gambled with Mrs. Morton's stock as security. I and my people hold it. If anything is to be done it must be done quickly. I expect you to do your part, Mr. Needham."

In the face of ruin and dishonor Freddie called on reserves of strength.

"You understand that your hostess of last night will be the chief sufferer?"

"I do," O'Hara responded. "I have no alternative. But I see no immediate reason for telling her. There is some of her stock unpledged, isn't there?"

Gaining no response Marsden quietly went on: "Judge Lawrence will act as my attorney and arrange the details. You understand, I take charge tomorrow."

In Lawrence's office O'Hara came quickly to his point. The old man shifted himself in his chair, turned an expressionless face upon his client.

"I understand," he said presently. "I am to go ahead exactly as though the deal were to be concluded tomorrow. Needham can get no extensions of time nor raise more money. He has already hypothecated Mrs. Morton's holdings." He paused. "I feel bound to say that I think Mrs. Morton would bitterly resent any—er—personal attack on Freddie."

"Nothing of this whole matter must ever come to Mrs. Morton's ears, Judge," Marsden interposed. "Needham resigns—of his own free will. That is all."

Later Marsden called Elsie on the telephone and suggested a motor ride. She accepted shyly. At two o'clock he was at her door in a newly purchased roadster.

They went through the city without much said. But O'Hara felt that she was in a mood of liking for his society. Once out in the country he turned towards the sea and off the highway. It was a road he had often driven with Elsie during their courtship.

"You seem to know the country pretty well, Mr. Marsden," she remarked.

"Oh, I've been here several times!" he said.

"And you say you knew my husband?"

"Slightly, very slightly. I rather forget what he looked like, I'm afraid. A big chap with a broken nose and a little of the look and attitude of a mastiff?"

Elsie sighed. "I suppose that might describe him to some people," she returned softly.

He looked at her. Her eyes were dimmed with tears.

"I saw you once before, too," he went on, urged by an impulse he knew to be illogical. "In fact, that is why I made it a point to come West and handle the present business myself."

He saw she was interested and said no more for several miles. Then the strain on his self-control suddenly snapped.

"I have always—since the day I first saw you—been in love with you."

"Oh!"

"It sounds very bold and very presuming," he went on, driving more slowly.



"But it has been my dream that I might persuade you to marry me."

Elsie was quickly on her guard. She surveyed him coolly. He felt that she did not wholly disapprove.

"I'm aware I'm hardly the man to make the proper kind of plea," he went on earnestly. "I've studied you, you see. I can offer you comfort, plenty of play, travel, freedom from worry and complete devotion. But I'm not what you Westerners like so much—the rugged, impulsive, serious-minded yet gay adventurers who go about their affairs single-hearted. To tell the truth, I love life only because life holds you. Nothing else matters."

She drew away, almost as if by pure force of will. "I had a husband whom I loved devotedly," she responded in a low voice. "You probably heard a lot of talk. But since he has been—gone, I know that I loved him and that I love him still." She reached out and laid her hand on his on the wheel. "I am still his," she whispered.

Marsden brought the car to standstill and bowed his head a moment. For one instant his heart had been thumping wildly, with delight; now grim despair overtook him. He had thrown away his chance. He had forever surrendered the woman he loved, who loved him. Elsie loved Tom Morton, and Tom Morton was dead.

So he said no more till they were back at Elsie's door. He helped her out of the car and they stood for a moment looking into each other's eyes.

"May I call again?" he asked, almost inaudibly.

She hesitated a moment, standing with rounded chin lifted above the furs at her throat, her dark eyes shining and splendid, red lips softly curved and alluring.

"It seems like a dream," she whispered. "Like a dream," he assented.

She stepped backward and smiled. "You may call again," she said and slipped away. He stared at the closed door for a moment and drove off.

At ten the next morning he was in the offices of the Blue Star Line. Needham was there, composed and taciturn, though his eyes were filled with uneasy pain. Judge Lawrence was also there, a strange figure in those surroundings, his lean and meager face set in an expressionless mask. On the great table before them lay a packet of papers.

Finally Elsie Morton came in. Her searching glance rested first on Freddie Needham. Then she turned and swiftly nodded to Marsden and Judge Lawrence. Marsden offered her a chair.

"We have sent for you to explain a change in the management of this company, Mrs. Morton," Lawrence began in his dry voice. Followed a long, detailed account of the line's condition, the fact that certain security holders desired a new management and so on. During this recital O'Hara sat and watched Elsie Morton. He saw that she hardly understood what was going on, was helpless. Yet something said roused her to look sharply at Needham. He did not meet that candid gaze but bent his head. Thereafter Elsie did not so much as glance at him.

"Mr. Marsden will take over the line's affairs," the judge finished gravely.

So it ended, with a few dull formalities,



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a few words almost inarticulate. And then Marsden went over to Mrs. Morton and smiled down on her.

"There are some things you ought to know," he said quietly. "May I drive you home?"

She nodded and together they went down the elevator and to the street. It was just noon and the thoroughfare was crowded. O'Hara helped his companion into his car and they sped off. Several times he tried to speak, but found no words. In utter despair he drove on, his eyes automatically serving him but in reality carrying nothing to his brain. At the Morton house he came to a stop and helped Elsie out. She glanced at him with a curious expression on her face, an expression profound and solicitous.

Side by side they went up the steps, she seemingly unaware of any oddity in this man's entering her home uninvited. Then she gave him a startled look, halted at the top, turned and held out her hand.

But O'Hara Marsden appeared not to see it. He dived into a pocket and extracted therefrom a small bunch of keys. Elsie stared at this with dreamy, wide-open eyes. One he quickly chose and inserted in the keyhole. The door swung open at his touch.

They entered the shadowy hall without a word. No one was there. The door closed behind them. For a moment they faced each other in the dusk. Marsden put his keys back into his pocket with an odd familiar gesture. But he said nothing. She gazed at him and her eyes were dewy.

"You love me," he said quietly. "And I love you."

She bowed her head in assent.

"I don't know why," she murmured.

O'Hara held out his arms. She hesitated, tried to gather her self-control. "The keys!" she whispered. Then she cried out, "Who are you?"

O'Hara laughed softly. "The man who loved you," he said imperiously.

"Who loved me?"

"Who loves you," he responded, triumphantly, and took a step farther.

She did not withdraw. But her dark eyes shone on his with a mysterious expression, fathomless and shy.

"And you love me?" he demanded. Then he added, "Elsie!"

Cosmopolitan for April, 1922

She bent her pretty head, without words. "I have never forgotten Tom," she whispered, last barriers of self-defense. Suddenly their lips met. And he felt the old passion surging up, ardent and enduring.

She nestled closer to him and he held her strongly in his arms. But she drew back a little. He heard the words murmured in his ear:

"It's a dream! How could it happen?"

"How does love ever happen?" he asked softly. "It comes and never goes."

"Never goes?" she repeated.

"Never!" he said firmly.

She slipped her arms about his neck and sighed with pure contentment.

At this moment the portières at the rear opened and a gaunt silent figure entered. O'Hara turned and glanced at him.

"It never goes," Judge Lawrence said in his dry, elderly voice, sharp and poignant.

Elsie drew out of O'Hara's arms and gave this newcomer a defiant look. The judge bowed.

"I'd come to settle some minor details and I was shown into the library," he remarked. His grim face settled into hard lines. "I'm sorry to intrude."

He came forward and laid a check book on the table.

"My husband's!" Elsie said in a hushed voice. Then she turned to O'Hara.

"Yes, it's mine," he said.

"But you?" she pleaded, throwing out her arms in utter surrender, as much as to say, "I am yours—be merciful."

Marsden laughed contentedly.

Judge Lawrence wiped his eyeglasses and an odd, unaccustomed gentleness was in his voice.

"I'll call later," he murmured. With one long look at them he departed.

But Elsie was gazing up into O'Hara's face with such a look as no one had ever seen on her countenance before. Marsden stood with bowed head, abashed in the presence of his desire.

Abruptly he roused himself. He saw the woman before him, her clear eyes dimmed, her lips parted softly.

She lifted her dewy eyes to his in an expression profound and passionate. For some reason he knew she understood. Yet he started at her words:

"Again," she murmured.

## The Woman Who Cheated

(Continued from page 32)

She sat in exactly the same position until the outer door closed. Then she sprang up.

"Dan—you didn't mean it! You're not going away! Dan—I couldn't bear it!"

A tense hand, outstretched, stopped her. "Wait! Not here—not in his house! Get your things. I want to talk to you."

They drove silently through the silent streets. Once and once only did she lean over and lay her hand on the ones that hung limp between his knees. There was no response.

Not until they were at opposite sides of a little restaurant table close to the wall as they had been two years before, did he raise his head and look at her.

"I can't go on with it, Natalie."

She took a sharp breath. Fear it was.

"You mean—you don't care—any more?"

He gave a crisp, curt laugh.

"I care too much—that's why I'm going."

"I won't let you! I won't let you, do you hear—" The words were hardly whispered but he stopped her.

"Listen to me—please—and don't say anything until I've finished. For two years we've been stealing something that should be ours—not by stealth. For a year I've been shaking the hand of the man I'm robbing, accepting his friendship—giving him mine—and going through hell while I was doing it."

"I couldn't help having you meet—you know that," her voice broke—"I tried to avoid it—I did everything in my power.

But he kept insisting and I couldn't put it off any longer without rousing his suspicion."

"Rousing his suspicion—that's it! It's a rotten phrase to have to apply to what we feel! But it's been the writing on the wall for us for two years. Every move we've made, every thought, every turn, it's stared us in the face. Don't rouse suspicion! Sneaks!" And as she flinched: "Yes, that's what it's made of us. When I sit at his table, weighing every word, every look, I feel like the lowest thing on earth. And I like him—that's the joke of it! We like each other, that's the damnable joke on us both!"

She cringed under the look of pain in his eyes. She raised her face, a white that was almost luminous under the parted black hair, and her voice came rich with tenderness.

"But we've had each other, Dan. No one can take that away."

"Has it satisfied you? Those stolen meetings—have they made up to you for what our life together should be? The thing we ought to be willing to proclaim to high heaven, does it mean nothing that we have to hide it like something unclean? Does this love of ours mean companionship or is it a purely physical thing—?"

"Dan!"

"Why not face facts? We've got to tonight—or never."

"What do you mean?"

"You ought to be my wife—you're his. You should never have married him and you thought you'd rectify it by quibbling, by dodging issues. God, what a joke! Sooner or later, the issues have got to be faced. And our time is tonight. Tonight we go to Tony Gleason and tell him the truth!"

"Dan—"

"Wait—let me finish! We tell him that your marriage was a mistake. We tell him what has been going on these past two years—"

"Dan—we can't! That would wreck—all of us."

"Let it, then! It's the one way to clear things up. He's got to be made to see that you can't go on living with him. A clean breast—and we start over again. It's the one way—for you, for me, for all of us. I demand it, Natalie."

"Dan—you don't know what you're doing. You're asking the impossible. Why can't we go on—?"

"We can't go on. I've told you why. You began by cheating yourself, Natalie. You've ended by cheating both him and me. The process has made a cheat of me, too, but that's my responsibility. Now I've come to the point where I can't stand up under it. I'm going to give Tony Gleason a square deal, either by telling him the truth and letting him handle it as he sees fit, or by going away."

The woman sat for a moment without speaking, with head bent and hands nervously interlaced. Finally as sharp as the headman's ax was in his voice, in the set of his jaw, in the resolve that shone from his eyes. It descended on them both, uncompromising, ruthless in its sentence.

"It's for you to decide," he ended. "It rests entirely with you."

"Dan—is that—is it quite fair to ask me to disrupt my life this way at a moment's notice?"

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"If you don't do it at short notice, you never will. You'll quibble, Natalie—you'll beg the question. We'll be cowards again." He reached a sudden hand across the table. "Dear—let's be brave tonight. Let's be what we should have been two years ago. Let's face the music. Isn't it worth the sacrifice?"

Her lip caught between her teeth. She did not answer.

"Isn't it?"

"Dan—it—it all seems so unnecessary."

"It's the one thing absolutely necessary. A clean slate to square ourselves and we take what's coming to us—from him."

Her mouth, her hands, her whole body were trembling.

"Natalie—"

"Yes?"

"You understand I'm not trying to influence you—not threatening—"

"Yes."

"But if we don't go through with this tonight, settle it once and for all, I go abroad next week and I stay—definitely."

"Dan—I can't bear it!"

"If the time comes then that you decide to do what I want done now, you'll have to go to him alone and that will be harder for you. I won't come to you again until I know that Gleason knows."

She dropped her head, her eyes, and on her tensely clasped hands tears that had been choking her fell. She brushed them away quickly, raised her head.

"You're torturing me," she breathed.

"I know, dear—but it can't be helped. It's not going to be easy for either of us. Well—" as her eyes fell again—"what do you say?"

"We'll tell him," came anguished.

They drove back to the austere house whose darkened windows turned blank faces to the night. She took a latchkey from her bag, but her hand was so unsteady that it fell with a sharp ring on the stone step. He picked it up, unlocked the door. As they entered the drawing room, he put an arm round her, but she drew away, frightened. The fire embers burned like a big red eye. She switched on the lights hastily and glanced around. They were alone.

She rang for the butler and asked if Mr. Gleason had come in. He had not, but had telephoned fifteen minutes before to say he would be home within half an hour.

Without a word, they waited, he walking the floor, she with hands gripped together and breath coming quickly.

A grandfather's clock in the hall ticked off the minutes. She counted them.

Presently the sound of a key in the lock reached their strained ears. The outer door opened, shut. Then the door of the vestibule, and a step came along the hall.

Natalie Gleason sprang up. A swift hand shot warningly across her lips. A look of absolute terror filled her eyes.

"Dan," she cried. "I can't—I can't!"

### III

Boston, Sept. 2nd.

My darling,—

I'm writing this letter, the first in five months. You asked me not to communicate with you unless I had something

definite to say. If I try to tell you the loneliness, the longing, the misery of those months, I shall only be trying to put into words something that can't be expressed by them. You can't know how many times I've taken my pen in hand to talk to you, how many times I've destroyed letters it was useless to send. I knew there was only one you wanted from me, only one you would read. I knew that until I could bring myself to write that one, there was no use writing at all.

Dan dear, I was a fool to think I could go on living without you. If I needed proof, these months of emptiness have given it to me. That night when I let you go, when I was afraid to face Tony, there was back in my consciousness the feeling that you'd think it over, that I could sway your determination after all. I hadn't realized what a man you are. But the fact that you could go through with it has only made me love you more. When I heard you had sailed without seeing me—I knew your strength. I'd have given anything in the world if mine had equaled it then.

But now it does. Now I'm going to do the thing you demanded of me. Gladly! You said we ought to be able to shout to high heaven what we've been concealing. Well, I'm going to. I've quit being a cheat. Today when Tony comes home I'm going to face him with the truth—alone—and take the consequences. I want you, dear. I want you back again. I can't go on without you and I don't care now what suffering I have to go through if at the end of it—there's you.

I want to tell him! I want him to know how I love you. I want to put myself through the ordeal of confession. Only don't call me a cheat any longer.

When you receive this letter, cable me and come back. I shall be waiting.

Your

NATALIE.

The woman at the desk signed her name as she had written the letter, with a haste that was almost hysteria. Her brows and lips were pressed together. Her breath came with the short gasps of one who has entered a dark forest afraid but determined to fight his way out.

When the pen lifted from the page, her head went down on it, her lips relaxed, resting on the written words. At last she had had the courage! At last the months of hedging were behind her! She had found the strength to play fair, to reach toward the thing so long beyond her, to grasp it at any cost, at any sacrifice.

His last words, "I won't communicate with you until you send for me—and you know the conditions!" kept recurring.

He would come. She would hear his voice again, feel his touch, be his before the world as he wanted her to be. She would not be afraid!

She folded the letter, placed it in an envelope, sealed and addressed it. Sudden peace engulfed her. Now that her determination was sealed with that envelope, she couldn't wait to make the revelation that must be made. Whatever the penalty, she would accept it with the sense that it was slight, in view of all it was giving back to her.

With head lifted and joy shining through the anxiety in her eyes, she waited for Anthony Gleason. She stood at the window, looking out eagerly at each car that passed, watching for one she knew to draw up at the curb. Once or twice she brushed the black hair from her brow with a little nervous movement of impatience.



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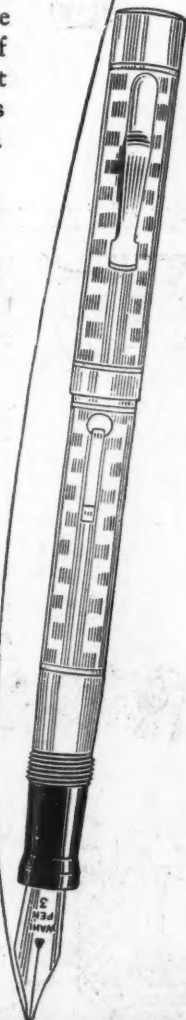
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# Resinol Soap



Finally she went back to the desk, picked up the letter and held it clutched tight. It gave her, somehow, the sensation of Dan Halliday's hand in hers. It was the link to the future.

The door opened and she turned. Gleason had come in quietly—she had not heard him. He paused for an instant without looking in her direction. She got the impression that he did not know she was in the room and went swiftly toward him.

"Tony," she plunged in, a faint catch in her voice, "I've been waiting for you. There's something I must tell you—here—now—"

He came toward her as swiftly, one hand put out with a curious gesture as if he wanted to steady her.

"You know, then?"

She drew back.

"Know—what?"

He switched on the lights and she noticed suddenly how dead white his face was. She had never seen Tony's face like that.

"Know—what?" she repeated.

He seemed unable to speak. Instead he took a newspaper from his pocket and held it folded for her to read.

At the top of a column, black headlines grinned at her . . .

### DANIEL HALLIDAY KILLED

Prominent New Yorker  
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Car Goes Over—"

She did not read further. She did not faint. She merely stood still, with eyes that stared and lips muttering phrases that meant nothing. So completely had she failed to grasp the significance of those printed words, that they swayed back and forth in her brain like a thudding pendulum.

"It's—not true!" came at last.

His hands went out in pathetic affirmation.

"It—can't—be," she heard herself saying. "It—mustn't!"

She looked about, bewildered, as the voice of her husband answered.

"That's what I said. Good God, why—why—?" His voice shook. Tears unashamed raced down his cheeks.

She turned her head. A stiff smile seized her features, held them as if they, too, were dead.

"Yes—why?"

"Natalie—don't look like that! Don't! Darling—" He collapsed in a chair. His head went into his hands. "I've been trying to get up the courage to come home and tell you. We shouldn't have urged him to go. I feel like his executioner. Dan—Dan Halliday—the whitest man that ever lived!"

Her two hands clenched. Tony—his executioner—Tony!

Something sharp cut into her palm. She opened it. The corner of an envelope. Her letter—the link to the future! Vaguely her eyes went down to the head bent in sorrow over the man she had loved. Her lips twitched. Her throat closed. Then with fingers that were numb, she tore the letter into tiny bits. She could never tell now. She would have to go on cheating the rest of her life.



## December Love

(Continued from page 87)

would very soon be public property. How crazy she had been to visit Arabian's flat at such a moment! She was angry with herself, and yet she believed that in like circumstances she would do the same thing again. And Craven? What could he be thinking about her? That she had asked him to come all the way to Glebe Place merely in order that he might see her in deep conversation with another man. And she had not even spoken to him. By what she had done she had certainly alienated Craven.

And her father was dead!

Would it be necessary for her to go to America? Her father was very rich. She was his only child. He must certainly have left her a great deal of his money. For his second wife was wealthy and would not need it. There might be business to do which would take her to New York.

But this man, Arabian, would he let her go without a word, without doing something? She could not believe it. Arabian was a man who could wait—but not forever.

She still seemed to feel the pulse beating in his warm hand as she drove through the rain and the darkness.

Mrs. Ackroyde had a pretty little house in Upper Grosvenor Street, but she spent a good deal of her time in a country house which she had bought at Coombe, close to London. Coombe Hall, as her place was called, was a rallying ground for members of the Old Guard.

Lady Sellingworth had occasionally been to Coombe Hall, but for several years now she had ceased from going there. She was, therefore, rather surprised at receiving a note from Mrs. Ackroyde soon after her return from Geneva, urging her to motor to Coombe on the following Sunday for lunch.

I suppose there will be the usual crowd, Mrs. Ackroyde wrote, and I've asked Alick Craven and two or three who don't often come. What do you think of Beryl Van Tuyn's transformation into an heiress? I hear she's come into over three million dollars. I suppose she'll be more unconventional than ever now. Minnie Birchington met her just after her father's death, in fact the very day his death was announced in the papers. She'd just been to tea with a marvelously good looking man called, something Arabian, who has taken a flat in Rose Tree Gardens opposite to Minnie's. Evidently this is the newest way of going into deep mourning.

Lady Sellingworth hesitated for some time before answering this note. Probably, indeed almost certainly, she would have refused the invitation but for the last three sentences about Beryl Van Tuyn. She had not seen Beryl since the death of Mr. Van Tuyn.

In her heart Lady Sellingworth hated humbug, and she knew of course that any pretense of real friendship between Beryl and her would be humbug, in an acute form.

She had not seen Craven since her return to London. In spite of her anger against him, which was complicated by a feeling of almost contemptuous disgust, she longed to see him again.

And now came this invitation, putting it in her power to meet Craven again naturally. Should she go?

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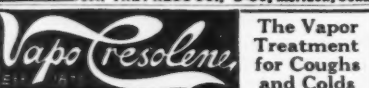


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She read Dindie Ackroyde's note once more carefully, and a strange feeling stung her. She had been angry with Beryl for being fond of Craven. (For she had supposed a real fondness in Beryl.) Now she was angry with Beryl for a totally different reason. It was evident to her that Beryl was behaving badly to Craven. Arabian! That was the name of the man Dick Garstin was painting, or had been painting. Beryl had described him as a living bronze.

Lady Sellingworth saw Beryl as a treacherous lover, as well as an unkind friend, and a heartless daughter, and suddenly her anger against Craven died in pity. She had believed for a little while that she hated him, but now she longed to protect him from pain, to comfort him, to make him happy, as surely she had once made him happy, if only for an hour or two. She forgot her pride and her sense of injury in a sudden rush of feeling that was new to her, that, perhaps, really had something of motherliness in it. And she sat down quickly and wrote an acceptance to Mrs. Ackroyde.

When Sunday came she felt excited and eager, absurdly so for a woman of sixty. But her secret diffidence troubled her. She looked into her mirror and thought of the piercing eyes of the Old Guard.

And what would Alick Craven think? Nevertheless she put a little more red on her lips, called her maid, and had something done to her hair.

Lady Sellingworth's excitement increased as she drove towards Coombe. It was complicated by a feeling of shyness. To herself she said that she was like an old debutante. "What will they say? What will he think? What will happen to me today?"

The car turned into a big gravel sweep between tall red brick walls, and drew up before Mrs. Ackroyde's door.

In the long drawing room Lady Sellingworth found many people whom she knew. Mrs. Ackroyde gave her blunt, but kindly, greeting, with her strange eyes, fierce and remote, yet notably honest, taking in at a glance the result of Geneva.

Over the heads of the crowd in the lower part of the room, Lady Sellingworth saw Craven again. He was sitting beside a pretty girl, whom Lady Sellingworth didn't know, and talking. His face looked hard and bored, but he was leaning towards the girl as if trying to seem engrossed, intent on the conversation and on her.

At this moment there was a general movement. The butler had murmured to Mrs. Ackroyde that lunch was ready.

Lady Sellingworth was among the first few women who left the drawing room, and was sitting at a round table in the big stone-colored dining room when Baron de Melville, an habitu   at Coombe, bent over her.

"I'm lucky enough to be beside you!" he said. "This is a rare occasion. One never meets you now."

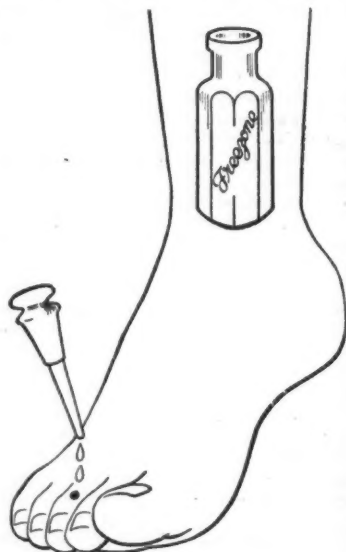
He sat down at her right. The place on her left was vacant. Suddenly she was aware of a movement on that side. She felt as if she blushed, though no color came into her face.

"How are you, Lady Sellingworth?" She had not turned her head, but now she did, and met Craven's hard, uncompromising blue eyes and deliberately smiling lips.

"Oh, it's you! How nice!"

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She gave him her hand. He just touched it coldly. What a boy he still was in his polite hostility! What reason, what right, had he to greet her so frigidly? How had she injured him?

A roar of conversation had begun in the room. Everyone seemed in high spirits.

Lady Sellingworth talked to the Baron till halfway through lunch. Miss Van Tuyn was presently the theme of his discourse. Evidently he did not know anything about her and Alick Craven. For he discussed her and her change of fortune without embarrassment and spoke of the visit to Rose Tree Gardens. Evidently all the Coombe set was full of this mysterious visit, paid to an Adonis whom nobody knew, in the shadow of a father's death.

The Baron was addressed by his neighbor and Lady Sellingworth was left free for a conversation with Craven.

"We were speaking about Beryl," she began.

Suddenly she felt hard, and she wanted to punish Craven, as we only wish to punish those who can make us suffer because they have made us care for them.

"It seems that—they are all saying—"

She paused. She wanted to repeat the scandalous gossip about Beryl's visit to this mystery man, Arabian, immediately after her father's death. But she couldn't do it.

"What are they all saying about Miss Van Tuyn? Anything amusing?"

"No. And in any case it's not the moment to talk nonsense about her, just when she is in deep mourning."

"What does it matter? They fire at us all the year round. The carnage is mutual."

Something in his voice made her suddenly feel very sad, with a coldness of sorrow that was like frost binding her heart. Why could not he and she understand each other? Why had she nothing to rest on? Winter! She had entered into her winter, irrevocable, cold and leafless. But the longing for warmth would not leave her. Winter was terrible to her, would always be terrible. In an attempt to rid herself of depression she gossiped gaily with the Baron until luncheon at last was over.

She threaded her way slowly through the crowd, talking calmly to one and another, seeing everything, understanding everything, tremendously at home in the midst of complications.

She looked out, then looked across the room. Craven was standing near the door. He had just come in with a lot of men from the dining room. His cheeks were flushed. His eyes shone almost feverishly. As she looked at him, not knowing that he was being watched he drew a long breath, almost like a man who feared suffocation. Immediately afterwards he glanced across the room and saw her.

She beckoned to him. With a reluctant air, and looking severe, he came to her.

"Are you going to play bridge?" she said.

"I don't think so."

"Shall we take a little walk in the garden? I am so unaccustomed to crowds that I am longing for air."

"Certainly," he said, stiffly.

"Does he hate me?" she thought, with a sinking of despair. He went to fetch her wrap. They met in the hall.

"Let us go through this door in the wall. It must lead to the gardens."

"Certainly!"



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*Cosmopolitan for April, 1922*

He pushed it open. They passed through and were away from the motors, standing on a broad terrace which skirted the back of the house.

Craven said nothing, and walked stiffly beside his companion looking straight ahead. He seemed entirely unlike the man who had talked so enthusiastically in her drawing room after the dinner in the *Bella Napoli*, and again on that second evening when they had dined together without the company of Beryl Van Tuyn.

Suddenly, moved by an impulse that was almost girlish, she stopped on the path and said:

"What is the matter with you today? Why are you angry with me?"

Craven flushed.

"Angry? But I am not angry!"

"Yes, you are. Tell me why."

"How could I—I'm really not angry. As if I could be angry with you—but you went abroad without letting me know."

"Is that it?" she said.

And there was a strange note, like a note of joy, in her voice.

"I think you might have told me. And you put me off. I was to have seen you—"

"Yes, I know."

She was silent. She could not explain. That was impossible. Yet she longed to tell him how much she had wished to see him. She knew he was suffering obscurely that day, perhaps in his pride, perhaps in something else. She hoped it was in his pride. Anyhow she felt pity for him in her new found happiness. For she was happier now in comparison with what she had been.

And with that happiness came a great longing to comfort him, to draw him out of his cold reserve, to turn him into the eager and almost confidential boy he had been with her. As they walked towards the end of the garden which skirted the woods she said:

"I want you to understand something. I know it must have seemed unfriendly in me to put you off, and then to leave England without letting you know. But I had a reason which I can't explain."

"Yes?"

"I shall never be able to explain it. But if I could you would realize at once that my friendship for you was unaltered."

"Well, but you didn't let me know you were back. You did not ask me to come to see you."

"I did not think you would care to come."

"But—why?"

"I—perhaps you—I don't find it easy now to think that anyone can care much to be bothered with me."

"Oh—Lady Sellingworth!"

"That really is the truth. Believe it or not as you like. You see I am out of things now."

"You need never be out of things unless you choose."

"Oh, the world goes on and leaves one behind! Don't you remember my telling you and Beryl once that I was an Edwardian?"

"If that means un-modern I think I prefer it to modernity. I think perhaps I have an old-fashioned soul."

He was smiling now. The hard look had gone from his eyes; the ice in his manner had melted. She felt that she was forgiven. And she tried to put the thought of Camber out of her mind. Beryl was un-

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scrupulous. Perhaps she had exaggerated. And in any case surely she had treated, was treating, him badly.

She felt that he and she were friends again, that he was glad to be with her once more. There was really a link of sympathy between them. And he had been angry because she had gone abroad without telling him. She thought of his anger and loved it.

That day, after tea, while the music was still going on in Dindie Ackroyde's drawing room, they drove back to London together, leaving their reputations quite comfortably behind them in the hands of the Old Guard.

Beryl Van Tuyn found that it was not necessary for her to cross the ocean on account of her father's sudden death.

One evening Miss Van Tuyn felt almost desperate. Enclosed in her reserve, she longed for a confidante; she longed to talk things over, to take counsel with some one.

She knew what people were saying of her in London. Mrs. Ackroyde had frankly told Miss Van Tuyn that she was being gossiped about in a disagreeable way and that, in spite of her established reputation for unconventionality, she ought to be more careful.

Dindie Ackroyde's visit had deepened the nervous preoccupation which was beginning seriously to alarm old Fanny.

If she took old Fanny's advice and left London? If she returned to Paris? She believed, indeed she felt certain, that to do that would not be to separate from Arabian. He would follow her there. And she knew that. If she went to Paris she would be separated from Alick Craven. She did not want to be separated from him.

Her clever visit to Adela Sellingworth had evidently not achieved its object. In spite of her so deliberate confession to Adela the latter once more had taken possession of Craven.

Miss Van Tuyn felt angry and disgusted, even indignant, but she also felt saddened and almost alarmed. She knew that she had seriously offended Craven. She knew that she had outraged his pride, and perhaps something else.

But it was not only her vanity which prompted her to stay on. She had a curious and strong liking for Craven which was very sincere. It was absolutely unlike the painful attraction which pushed her towards Arabian.

In the evening there was a knock at the door, and a rosy-cheeked page boy tripped in with a note on a salver.

"Any answer?" she said.

"No, mum."

She took the note and at once recognized Dick Garstin's enormous handwriting. Quickly she opened it and read:

Glebe.  
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DEAR B.:

Does your mourning prevent you from looking at a good picture? If not, come round to the studio tomorrow any time after lunch and have a squint at a king in the underworld.

D. G.

At once her feeling of acute boredom left her, was replaced by a keen sense of excitement. She realized immediately that at last Garstin had finished his picture, that at last he had satisfied himself.

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She had not seen Garstin since the day when she had heard of her father's death. Nor had she seen Arabian. He had made no sign in all these days, had not left a card, had not attempted to see her.

Directly after lunch on the following day she walked to Glebe Place, wondering whether Arabian would be there.

As usual Garstin answered the door. "It is finished?" she asked.

"Yes, at last it's done."

"Has—have you shown—I suppose he has seen it?"

Garstin shook his head and a dark lock of hair fell over his forehead.

"He doesn't even know it is finished, the ruffian! He's given me a cursed lot of trouble. I'll keep him on the gridiron a bit longer. Grilling will do him good."

"Then I am the first?"

"Yes, you are the first."

"Thank you, Dick," she said, soberly.

"May I go up now?"

"Yes, come on!"

She followed him eagerly, yet with a feeling of apprehension. What would it be—this portrait finished at last? Had he caught and revealed the secret of Arabian?

"Now then!"

He went over to a distant easel, pulled it forward with its back to them, then, when it was near to the sofa, turned it round.

"There he is!"

Miss Van Tuyn sat very still and gazed. Dick Garstin, after turning the easel, had gone to stand behind the sofa and her. After what seemed to both of them a very long time she spoke.

"I don't believe it!" she said. "I don't believe it! No, Dick! It's too bad!"

Her cheeks were flaming with red.

"Too bad! Don't you think it's well painted?"

"Well painted? Of course it's well—it's magnificently painted!"

He chuckled contentedly behind her.

"Then what's the matter?"

"You know what's the matter. You know quite well."

She turned sharply round on the sofa and faced him with angry eyes.

"He shall have it and put a knife through it if he likes. But—" he snapped out the word with sudden fierce emphasis—"but I'll exhibit it first."

"He'll never let you!" Miss Van Tuyn almost cried out.

"Won't he? That was the bargain!"

"He didn't promise. I remember quite well all that was said."

"It was understood. I told him I should exhibit the picture and that afterwards I'd hand it over to him."

"When is he going to see it?"

"Why do you ask? Do you want to be here when he does?"

She didn't answer. She was staring at the portrait, and now the hot color had faded from her face.

All that she had sometimes fancied, almost dimly, and feared about Arabian was expressed in Garstin's portrait of him. The man was magnificent on the canvas, but he was horrible. Evil seemed to be subtly expressed all over him.

In Garstin's picture Arabian was unmistakably a being of the underworld, a being of the darkness, of secret places and hidden deeds, a being of unspeakable craft, of hideous knowledge, of ferocious cynicism. And yet he was marvelously handsome



and full of force, even of power. It could not be said that great intellect was stamped on his face, but a fiercely vital mentality was there, a mentality that could frighten and subdue, that could command and be sure of obedience. In the eyes of a tiger there is a terrific mentality. Miss Van Tuyn thought of that as she gazed at the portrait.

In her silence now she was trying to get a strong hold on herself. The first shock of astonishment, and almost of horror, had passed. She was more sharply conscious now of Garstin in connection with herself. At last she spoke again.

"Of course you realize, Dick, that such a portrait as that is an outrage. It's a master work I believe, but it is an outrage. You cannot exhibit it. I hate art in kid gloves. But this is too merciless. It is more. It is a libel. It's a technical masterpiece and a moral outrage. You have taken a man for a model and painted a beast."

"Beryl," he said, "believe it or not, as you can, that is Arabian!"

"You are wrong this time," she said, with mutinous determination, but still with tears in her eyes. "You couldn't sum up Arabian. You tried and tried again. You have got angry. That's it. You have got furious with yourself and with him, because of your own impotence, and you have painted him in a passion."

"Oh, no!"

He shook his head.

"I never felt colder, more completely master of myself and my passions, than when I painted that portrait."

"But you asked me to find out his secret. You pushed me into his company that I might find it out and help you. Well!" she added, almost triumphantly, "I have never found it out. He is the most reserved, uncommunicative man I have ever known."

"Subconsciously you have found it out, and you have conveyed it to me. And that is the result. I suspected what the man was the first time I laid eyes on him. When I got him here I seemed to get off the track of him. For he's very deceptive—somehow. But then you put me wise. Your growing terror of him put me wise."

He looked hard into her eyes.

"Beryl, my girl, your sex has intuitions. One of them, one of yours, I have painted. And there it is!"

The bell sounded below.

"Ha!" said Garstin, turning his head.

He listened for an instant. Then he said: "I'll bet you anything you like that's the King himself."

"The King?"

"Of the underworld. Did you walk here?"

"Yes."

"He must have seen you. He's followed you. What a lark!"

His eyes shone with malicious glee.

"There goes the bell again! Beryl, I'll have him up. We'll show him himself."

He put a finger to his lips and went down, leaving her alone with the portrait.

*With the damning portrait completed, and confident of his power over Beryl, Arabian shows his hand. How the crisis comes, and the part that Lady Sellingworth plays in it is told in the next instalment of this remarkable novel in May COSMOPOLITAN—on sale at all news stands April 10.*



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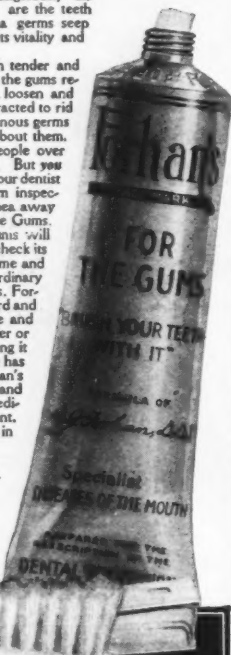
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MR. C. E. BROOKS

## The Breath of Scandal

(Continued from page 72)

that he was not doing anything which cowardly endangered his wife and daughter more than himself.

For he had figured that only two events were possible; either he would succeed in concealing the fact of his association with Mrs. Russell, and so avoid harming anyone else, or he would fail, and disgrace and scandal would come, but upon him, chiefly.

Indeed, he had argued with himself that he would be not only the chief sufferer but, in a certain sense, the sole sufferer in this second case. For, though he realized that there must be a period of mental distress through which his wife and daughter must pass, he honestly believed that they would emerge from it much the same as before and with no final, irretrievable damage done them. Other women seemed about the same after their divorce, he observed; and their daughters held their position in society and married well.

For, if discovered, he expected to be divorced; he reckoned that, as the result of the scandal, he might be forced out of Tri-State, but he was wholly confident of his ability to obtain another position and make money. His wife certainly would claim alimony and he always expected to pay it in sums sufficient to enable her and Marjorie to maintain the home; for he was not a man to consider escape from an obligation which he had assumed and never did he dream of repudiating his duty of supporting his wife and child.

He had fancied, even if the very worst came, that Marjorie would visit him sometimes, as he had fancied, when part of the worst actually had happened and she knew, that she would continue under his roof.

He was feeling for compensations, for some way of believing that a good to his daughter might, after all, come out of this damage he had done; and he desperately required to convince himself that there might be compensations. So he thought:

"She was a fine, able girl; she had any amount of promise; she might do anything! Yet how many fine, able girls with any amount of promise you see in all the homes like mine along the north shore and down into the city. And how few, how very, very few of the women you see in those homes amount to a hill of beans. How futile and insane they all are, doing nothing; phantom things, that's all. Nineties," he said that aloud to himself. "Nineties!"

Then he more vigorously reacted; Marjorie had disappeared as she had, partly to frighten and punish him; and he would not be frightened—particularly after he learned from a letter written on the boat by his wife and sent back by the pilot, that she had received a telegram from Marjorie at sailing. And he ascertained also that Marjorie had withdrawn from the savings bank the money of her own which had formed her legacy from Grandmother Winfield. He knew, therefore, that she had with her, or more likely had on deposit under another name in some other bank, at least five hundred dollars.

Physically Hale was himself again. Indeed, he seemed improved, if anything, in tone and steadiness and color by the weeks of enforced rest during his recuperation.

His eyes were clear, his hair regained luster; he stood and walked straight as before with that something new, in addition to the sense of power which previously he possessed, which the acknowledgment of power gives a man. And where he walked, women raised their eyes and gazed at him.

When his downtown meetings with men were over and he returned to his home or when, after he had entertained at home and the last guest was gone, Hale ascended to his room and sat around, usually smoking and half undressed, for a long time before going to bed. He never, on these occasions, wandered into his wife's room, but remained in his bedroom or in his dressing room. In the dark, sometimes he would stand with the window curtain raised and look in the direction where Sybil Russell lived. For, though several times he had spoken with her by telephone, he had not yet seen her.

He had no idea that he was about to see her—indeed, she was not in his mind at all—at this particular hour one evening when he was passing through the dining room of one of the downtown hotels, to a table reserved for him and several other men. And there she sat at a small table alone, close to the route he naturally would follow from the door to his table.

Apparently she did not see him when he entered. She was seated so that he caught a glimpse of her profile first—the fine, even lines of her brow and nose and lips, the pleasing turn of her chin, the alluring curve of her neck and the round of her breast. She held one hand to her cheek; with the other she touched a spoon and weighed it, pensively, in her slender, white, sensitive fingers. It was as if he had surprised her, all alone and offguard, in reverie.

His eyes rested on her fingers; and his sight seemed to supply him with tactual sensation of her fingers clasping his; then he seemed to feel her hand softly, but so intensely, touching his face. His eyes traveled up her white forearm; they lifted to her face and she slowly turned her head and glanced up, quietly, calmly—oh, so like her to show herself so calm—but he knew what passion she had underneath!

She met his eyes and recognized him, but no one except himself would have known it. He hardly would have been sure of it, if he had not been staring straight into her eyes; for they alone gave any sign.

And at that instant Charles Hale, if he could have summoned the power, would have banished all others throughout that wide room and drawn the walls close and cozy to confine them together. But he could not even speak to her; he could not even stop or delay in passing her; for she forbade it. The pupils of her eyes, when they directly met his, dilated; she could not control that; perhaps she did not wish to; then she looked down again at the spoon thoughtfully, as though nothing had happened. And he had to pass on.

At the table, he chose for himself a seat from which he could watch her without making it conspicuous and his attention was very intermittently on business that hour.

Sybil Russell received her order and he could watch, from his distance, her restrained, slight motions as she was served; and the sight of her so near, and yet so shut away, inflamed him. Was she here by mere chance, he wondered? If so, what a woman she was to meet him as she had; what a woman to achieve that, even if she was here by design, after she had learned that he was to dine here this night. It must be, he realized, that she had come to see him—and show herself to him—from refusal longer to bear separation from him. And how she had shown it for him, and only him, to see!

After a while she arose and moving in just the way he knew she would—with a slight toss of her head, her hand held a little lifted at her side, with more life in her stride than its seeming slowness disclosed, with other little characteristics which cried her to him—she left the room; and there he had to sit listening to figures and estimates of costs and taxes.

About half past nine, when he succeeded in getting away from the men, he did not go home; nor did he go to a club. He wandered into another hotel where he was not likely to encounter even an acquaintance and he sat down, sullen from his loneliness and his desire. He lighted a cigar and almost instantly threw it away; arose and sat in another room, stirring himself to review the disregard and neglect shown him by his wife. Now she was gone away again, satisfied—more than satisfied. Indeed, she preferred to be far off, spending money he earned and without considering any duty she owed him.

Of course he never demanded duty from her; he always—thank God—had been too proud for that. If she did not want to remain close to him, let her go! Obviously, it meant that she did not love him; any woman who loved a man would never dream of deserting him at a time like this—at the great hour of his triumph, to leave him alone!

He accused himself not at all for this desertion by her; he knew she was wholly ignorant of his unfaithfulness. No, so far as she could know, he was faithful to her as he had been faithful and kept himself faithful to her during the long, lonely, totally unjustified periods of her first desertions of him. Not many men—he told himself—would have endured that as long as he had; they would have done as he had or got a divorce.

He would have proceeded about a divorce, if that really had been the kinder alternative for him to take; but he had argued that it was not the kinder, even when considering solely his wife. For as his wife, in the relation which she maintained to him in these last years, she was thoroughly happy. She was getting what she wanted out of life—and from him, he considered bitterly. She always had got just what she wanted out of their marriage; from the very first when so cool, so sure of herself, so provoking of his passions, she had drawn him and known that she had him. She had let him win her because she intended to obtain, through him, just exactly what she wanted; and she had obtained it.

And he had been glad to give it to her; for he liked position, too, of course; he liked money and influence; but also he wanted, and had right to expect of her, more than that, while she—well, she



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actually seemed able to call it being a man's wife to bear his name proudly (for she undoubtedly was proud of him), to spend his money, and do herself and him credit by the way she gained place in the world for Mrs. Charles Hale.

He was proud of her for that; but pride in his mate was no substitute to him for love and passion. However, she could never understand that. What outrage she would feel—and what contempt for him—if he had told her that he, a matured man with a grown daughter, required passion still.

So he had sought and found passion elsewhere; leaving his wife to continue going her own way, serene and perfectly satisfied with what she had.

Women passed near him—a woman suggestive, slightly, of Sybil Russell; women gazed at him and lowered their eyes. He was attractive to women, though they did not know who he was; and this was the time of his triumph and his wife had left him to be alone. But he need not be alone. A woman—his woman—was awaiting him, he was sure. Not on Clearedge Street in that apartment where he had been shot and his daughter had come; but at another place they had used once. The thought of it roused him. Was she there?

He arose and entered a telephone booth and called that number; she was there.

About two o'clock in the morning he reached his home, which was quiet, of course, and dark except for the night light left for him; and except for the servants, it was empty. He imagined he heard a step in his daughter's room.

Had Marjorie come home? What a time for her to have come! How could he face her?

He listened for several moments; then, hearing nothing, he ascended and, after listening again, he proceeded to her door, knocked, and receiving no answer, he opened the door and entered.

The stillness of the room sent a shrinking through him. Never had he felt how finally she was gone—gone from him not to come back. Gone was his wife; gone forever from his home the quick young voices of Marjorie's and his friends; for he had made them his friends, those boys and girls who had come here. And Charles Hale had never in his pre-occupations with himself reckoned on loss of quite all this.

When he went to his own room, he found a memorandum left by Martin stating that Mr. Whittaker had telephoned during the evening and left his name; this was mere routine, for Billy telephoned for news of Marjorie every evening; it annoyed Hale, particularly when he happened to answer the telephone when Billy was calling. But Whittaker's extreme attitude did not disturb Hale as much as Gregg's slight change of manner with him. For he knew that Gregg's different attitude was because of Marjorie.

Hale did not mind meeting Billy on the street or Stanway or anyone else who knew, but he could not think comfortably about Gregg, particularly when he heard from Rinderfeld that Gregg had lost his position and had been unsuccessful in seeking another.

Gregg's business misfortune had occurred several days before; but although many others knew of it, Gregg did not mention it to Bill.

So when Gregg came into the flat after supper one night at the end of the week, and he discovered Billy lying motionless on his back on the couch gazing hopelessly at the ceiling, Gregg tossed his hat away and took a seat just out of the glare of the reading lamp.

"Lost your job, Bill?" he suggested, quietly.

"How could I lose my job?" Billy returned.

"Oh, it can be done!" Gregg said cheerfully. "If you're no good at it, there are others that are; lots of others these days. I've done it myself."

Billy slowly turned toward Gregg. "They let you out, you mean?"

"You've guessed it."

"Why?"

"Wasn't earning check-room costs on my hat."

"Why weren't you?"

Gregg shook his head; no more with Billy than with Mrs. Russell would he take refuge in generalities on business conditions.

"You know perfectly well why they let you out!" Billy charged him, becoming interested. "You're not a salesman; you never have been. You're just a good looking, pleasant person, Gregg; that's your advantage and your curse. I've always told you that. Now maybe you'll believe me and get to work."

"Where'll I get to work?"

"Why? Can't you get a job now? What's happened to your friend Hartford and the others who were so crazy to get you a couple of months ago?"

"A couple of months ago, everybody seemed to think that all that was needed to buck up business again and put it at its peak, was a cheerful disposition," Gregg said feelingly. "I had that; I still have—most of it, but—well, Hartford's not putting his carburetor on the market at all this year. And since last week Thursday I've seen 'em all—everybody who's ever barked himself that he wanted me to work for him. I'd have mentioned it to you before but I knew you're never very interested in partial returns; but every precinct's heard from now, Bill; and it's a landslide."

"Because everyone that knows you," said Billy deliberately, "knows that you've never really worked. Do you really want to work now?"

"No," said Gregg, without taking offense. "I wouldn't go so far as claim that; but I certainly need to go on drawing pay for the so-called activities which I've been palming off as work. To mention a few reasons," Gregg went on cheerfully, "not in the order of their moral importance, Bill, but simply as they occur to me in order of inconvenience; bank balance; I'm overdrawn. Then I'm rather above normal in the amount I'm back with you in our costs here; exactly how much?"

Billy faced about with his broad, red face flushing. "You know I'd never bother you about that, Gregg! That's all right," he cried in one of his sudden somersaults into emotion. "As long as I have a room or a meal, you have half, Gregg; you don't owe me a red cent and you never can!" And he got up and grabbed Gregg's arm and squeezed it.

"The devil I don't and I can't," Gregg acknowledged, unbeatifully. Bill meant it, he knew; and there was warmth about Bill, when he felt like this, which made

Gregg glow and almost made him show how he felt about Bill; but that would be maudlin, Gregg said to himself; maudlin.

Yet it had been a particularly unpleasant, lonely week for Gregg, so here, with Bill's arm about him, he had deliberately to check himself from thinking about Bill; which he did by remembering Marjorie. And, at the same moment, Bill remembered and cast up his arm.

"Oh, what are we talking about money for, when Marjorie's gone and no one knows where she is!"

"Yes, some one knows," Gregg said to him. Partly the admission was the result of his feeling for Bill, he realized instantly; but not entirely that; for he had decided with himself a few days ago that, unless some word came from Marjorie, Bill must know soon all that he did.

"What?" Bill grabbed him with both hands. "What did you say?"

"Rinderfeld knows, Bill," Gregg said, deciding to give it him all at once. "He's had her address since the first."

"Rinderfeld? How? . . . Where is she, Gregg?"

"I don't know."

But Billy gripped him only harder and accused, "You knew where she is and you could sit there and talk to me . . ."

Gregg stopped him. "I don't know where she is or anything about her but that Rinderfeld, I am sure, has her address."

"Oh!" Billy gaped in his confusion. "He's found her, has he?"

"Marjorie left her address with Rinderfeld when she went away," Gregg informed directly.

"What? When did you find that out?"

"I've known it all along," Gregg confessed. "Ever since she went away. In fact, she told me the last night I saw her, about a week before she went, that she was going, and no one would have her address but Rinderfeld." And Gregg related some of the circumstances. It took several minutes for Bill even to begin to comprehend, and then all that he seized was the fact that Marjorie deliberately and premeditatedly had planned to sever all connection with her family and friends except through Rinderfeld. Furiously, then, Bill accused Gregg for keeping this from him.

"How you could live in this flat with me; how you could see me every day, night and morning, Gregg; how you could sit down and talk over with me what might have happened to her; how you could have watched me walk the streets looking for her, hoping for her, praying for her; and know that all along and not tell me! How . . ." Billy assailed him between attempts to get Rinderfeld on the telephone; for Rinderfeld's home number was reported busy and his office did not answer.

Most of it Gregg took in silence, though now and then something Bill said goaded out something like, "Bill, I've walked the streets hoping for her, too."

Rinderfeld's home number answered. Mr. Rinderfeld was not in, but the girl would communicate with him at once. Billy requested and then demanded to know where he was; but Rinderfeld had no simpleton taking his calls. The girl took Mr. Whittaker's number and she presumed Mr. Rinderfeld would call Mr. Whittaker.

Rinderfeld did so in less than five minutes; and before the end of one more,

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Rinderfeld hung up. Billy tried to trace the 'phone from which Rinderfeld called but got no information.

"He's home," Billy charged in one impulse; then, "He might be with Marjorie now!" Billy snatched his hat and stick from the closet; but, not really believing Rinderfeld home, he went back in his impotent fury to Gregg; "What did you keep that to yourself for?"

And Gregg still managed to constrain himself. To have told how Marjorie had taken him into her heart that evening when she had protested against the inability of Billy to aid her; to have revealed the information she gave as a secret between her and himself—a confidence which she assumed he would keep and keep particularly from the man most bound to prevent her plan—anything like that would surely make matters worse. So Gregg rejoined only: "You'll get no more change out of Rinderfeld than you got over the 'phone. I've seen him, of course. He says—what he's been telling you—that until his client, who in this respect now is Marjorie, wishes her address given, he cannot supply it. She does not wish it; and she doesn't reply to letters yet. Of course I've tried."

But that made matters worse. "You haven't given me even a chance to try. I could have written her long ago! I could have made her reply; or made Rinderfeld lead her to me! You—you!" Billy was beside himself now. "You didn't want me to try; you wanted to keep her to yourself. That's why you tell me now, after you've found you can't do anything. You knew she was going, when you could have stopped her—or I could—because you wanted her to go so you could get her from me; you—" he thrust, breathless, before Gregg who went white, believing at that instant that Bill meant to attack him. The muscles throughout him tugged and appeared to tighten but Gregg kept himself down while he stood still, relaxed, before Bill.

"All right, Bill," he managed after a moment. "If that's what you want to

*In spite of Billy's good intentions, grim tragedy plays its part in the next instalment of this novel in May COSMOPOLITAN—on sale at all news stands April 10.*

## Broken Barriers

(Continued from page 44)

whisky. There was whisky of course. Come, out with the truth about it!"

"Well," Roy admitted shamefacedly, "we did have a bottle but we didn't drink enough of it to make any difference. Really, Grace, it was an accident; no one could have helped it."

"I'm not so sure of that. I understand now why you don't want to show yourself at home. The day I left you at Bloomington you promised to behave yourself and put in your best licks on your work, and already you're mixed up in a nasty scrape that would break mother's heart if she knew it. Mother's crazy about you; she'd sacrifice all the rest of us for you, and you evidently don't appreciate it at all."

"I understand all that, Sis. I told you I'd be glad to quit and let you stay on and finish. My hanging on in the law school is all a mistake."

"Well, don't whimper about it! It's too

believe, go to it." And he turned and went to the window. Billy did not follow him nor did Bill speak to him again. He went out and when Gregg felt the slam of the closed door, he trembled and could not quickly check his shaking; for he knew he had lost Bill. Bill would never forgive him, and he realized that he had helped neither Bill nor Marjorie nor anyone else.

Then he began to get himself together; he should not have done more to prevent Marjorie, he argued with himself. She had been bound to do what she had and interference would have had the effect only of driving her to more desperate means, perhaps. She had been going to discover and scrutinize life which she did not know and she would come through safe, he believed; and the better and nobler and greater for it. But, could he be sure?

A little before midnight, Billy returned, having waited at Rinderfeld's apartment until Rinderfeld appeared; and though Billy had threatened physical violence, he had got no "change" out of Rinderfeld.

Yet, before coming home, Billy had accomplished something by rousing out of bed the head of the most reliable private detective agency in Chicago and employing service which guaranteed that one competent operative would constantly watch Rinderfeld and report his movements, and instantly inform William Whittaker when Rinderfeld was found in the company of a certain girl of twenty-two who was described.

It was as a result of this stratagem that about eight o'clock in the evening of the sixth day later that William Whittaker, who then was alone in his apartment on East Pearson Street, received word that Rinderfeld was in the company of a girl, whom the operative believed the one described, and that she was dining with Rinderfeld, and another man and a girl, at a certain restaurant on the north side. So it was that Billy set out and, arriving at the restaurant named, he found there with Rinderfeld and two others, Marjorie.

late to weaken now. You don't deserve any pity for getting into a mess like this."

"Don't be so hard on me, Grace! I know I'm a fool and haven't sense enough to say no when anybody asks me to do things like that. But if you'll help me out this time I swear never to bother you again."

"All right, Roy. I haven't the money here but I'll walk over to the trust company with you and get it. But be sure this doesn't happen again. I don't want to rub it in but it may help you to keep straight if I tell you that it's just about all we can do to get by at home. Father is earning nothing; the family's clean busted. Mother's pinching and denying herself to be ready to give you a start when you leave the law school. I'm not complaining; I'm only telling you this because I don't think you mean to make it any harder for the rest of us than



you can. Come along; we've got to step lively."

"Now, Roy," she said as she gave him the money at the teller's window, "please behave yourself!"

He left her at the store, repeating his promises that he would never again ask her for money, and assuring her that he would make the most of his time for the remainder of the year.

She had dealt with him more severely than it was in her heart to do and she was a little sorry that she hadn't shown more tolerance for his misadventure.

Fairly considered his joy riding with undesirable companions was hardly more censurable than her participation in Kemp's party at The Shack, a matter as to which her conscience was still at times a little tender.

## IV

TRENTON wrote every day, letters in which there was no attempt to disguise his love for her. He hadn't warned her against keeping his letters but she destroyed each one after writing her reply.

These answers were little more than notes which she wrote and rewrote in trepidation lest she say too much or too little. Now that he had declared himself and was reiterating daily his complete absorption in her as to everything that affected his future, she could afford to risk certain reserves and coynesses. But she did love him; she had positively settled this question.

It was a tremendous thing that had happened to her; the realization of a great love—love awakened at a first meeting and endowed with all the charm of romance and the felicity of clandestine adventure. In one of her notes she wrote:

It is all like a dream. I never cease to marvel that you should care for me. Every note you send me is a happy surprise. If one failed to come I think I should die. You wanted me to take time to think. That is like my good and true knight. But I want you to consider too—everything. Your world is so much bigger than mine. Any day you may meet some one so much finer than I am, so much worthier of your love. And yet—I like to think that it all had to be, just as it has been—you and I wandering toward each other, guided by destiny.

To her intimations that he might have regrets, he replied in his next message with every assurance that he, too, shared her feeling that their meeting had been predestined of all time.

At the end of a week she became restless, eager for Trenton's return. She several times considered telegraphing him to make haste, but after going once to the telegraph office and writing the message she tore it up. He had asked her to wire whenever she was sure; the mere sending of a telegram would commit her irrevocably.

It was not so easy as she had imagined to write the words which meant that after pondering the matter with the gravity it demanded she was ready to enter into a relationship with him which would have no honest status, no protection, but would be just such an arrangement as Irene maintained with Kemp.

## V

GRACE had not yet wholly escaped from the effect of Dr. Ridgely's sermon, with

## Cosmopolitan Educational Guide

(Continued from page 10)

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its warning against self-deception in matters of conscience. She continued to observe carefully her associates in Shipley's, and other business girls she became acquainted with, and she had no reason for suspecting that most of them were not virtuous, high-minded young women who met cheerily all the circumstances of their lives.

Finding that Grace hadn't attempted to enlist Miss Reynolds's interest in the girl's club of Dr. Ridgely's church, Ethel Durland had sent the pastor himself to invite that lady to one of the meetings.

"I hope you will come Tuesday night," said Ethel, when she told Grace of this. "We want Miss Reynolds to see the scope of our work and your being there will be a help. Maybe you'd ask some of the girls in Shipley's? We want to have a record attendance. And we want the girls to bring their young men friends with them. It's our idea that the girls should feel that the church is like another home."

The attempt to establish a new high record of attendance brought twenty-five girls and four young men to the church parlors. Three of the young women were from Shipley's and had gone at Grace's earnest solicitation. Four were Servians, employed in a garment factory, and they were convoyed by young men of their own race.

"I wish you'd be specially nice to those Servians," Ethel remarked to Grace. "I had a hard time persuading them to come, but they brought their beaux with them. We must be sure they have a good time."

The beaux did not seem to relish the hopeless minority of their sex. The meeting was opened formally by Ethel as chairman of the entertainment committee. She introduced Dr. Ridgely, who expressed the hope that the club would develop into one of the strongest agencies of the church.

A young lady elocutionist who had volunteered her services recited a number of poems after Ethel had prepared the way with a few words on the new movement in poetry. The audience betrayed no great interest in the movement and seemed utterly mystified by the poems offered. However, Ethel now announced that the formal exercises were concluded and that they would repair to the basement where there would be dancing.

The music was provided by two negroes one of whom played the piano and the other the drum. A number of girls began dancing together and after some persuasion Grace succeeded in getting the four couples of Servians on the floor. Grace picked out several young girls who were huddled helplessly in a corner and danced with them, and then seized upon the young men and introduced them about in the hope of breaking the racial deadlock.

This was not wholly successful. The young fellows proved to be painfully shy when confronted by the necessity of dancing with girls they had never seen before. Nevertheless Grace's efforts resulted in putting some life and animation into the party. It had been her way in college to make things go, and it struck her suddenly that something might be done to inject some spirit and novelty into the occasion by asking the Servians to do some of their native dances. The dances were given with spirit in a circle formed by the rest of the company, who warmly applauded the quaint performance.

The result was the breaking down of

*Cosmopolitan for April, 1922*

restraint, and by the time the refreshments were served the room presented a scene of gaiety and good fellowship.

"You have a genius for that kind of thing, my dear; you managed that beautifully," said Miss Reynolds to Grace as they assisted in pouring chocolate and passing sandwiches. "You saved the evening! There's something wrong with this. As an effort to interest young people in the church this club hasn't much to say for itself. Girls won't go where there are no young men. I imagine young men are not easy to lure into church parlors to hear poetry read to them, particularly poetry that doesn't mean anything. And this cellar and the piano and drum can't compete with a big dance hall and a real jazz band. This has been going on about like this for several years. I don't know what can be done but it doesn't seem worth while."

"I don't know the answer either," said Grace who, more or less consciously, was observing this attempt to do something for working girls with reference to her own problems.

At eleven o'clock the musicians left and the entertainment came to an end.

"I'm so grateful to you Grace, for helping; this is the best meeting we've ever had," said Ethel after she had pressed a folder describing the church's activities upon the last of the company. "Don't you think our work well worth while, Miss Reynolds?"

"I was greatly interested," Miss Reynolds replied, without enthusiasm.

She took Grace and Ethel home in her car but did not encourage Ethel's attempt to discuss the evening. However, in bidding Ethel good night she said she would send her a check for one hundred dollars for the girls' club.

"Your work is important, Miss Durland; I sympathize with the purpose; but I don't think you've got quite the right plan. But I confess that I have no suggestion worth offering. I realize that it's not easy to solve these problems."

## VI

GRACE wasn't happy! Much as she tried to avoid the flat conclusion, the best she could do was to twist it into a question. Love was a worthless thing if its effect was merely to torture. She had told Trenton that she loved him and had virtually agreed to accept him on his own terms. Why, as the days passed, was she still doubting, questioning, challenging her love for him?

At the end of a rainy day that had been full of exasperations Grace left the store to take the trolley home. The rain had turned to sleet that beat spitefully upon her umbrella and the sidewalks were a mass of slush. She was dreading the passage home in the crowded car and the evening spent in her room thinking of Trenton, fashioning her daily letter. Turning the corner, she heard her name called.

"Hello there, Grace!"

"Why, Bob! Is it you?" she cried peering out at Cummings from under her umbrella.

He took her umbrella and fell into step with her.

"Don't seem so scared; of course it's I. Frankly this isn't just chance alone; I've been lying in ambush."



"This will never do!" she cried, but in spite of herself she was unable to throw any resentment into her tone.

"I've got a grand idea!" he said. "I'm playing hooky tonight. Evelyn called me up this afternoon to ask if I'd go to dine with an uncle of hers who's having a birthday. These family parties are bad enough at Christmas and Thanksgiving but when they begin ringing in birthdays I buck. So I told Evelyn I was too tired to go and that I had a business engagement anyhow, and would get my dinner downtown."

"Do you realize that I'm getting wet! You beat it for your family party; I'm going home."

"Please, Grace, don't desert me! Let's have a cozy supper together and I'll get you home early."

"I told you I'd never see you again!" she said indignantly. "You have no excuse for waylaying me like this. It's unpardonable!"

"Don't be so cruel!" he pleaded. "I'll be awfully nice—honestly I will! You won't have a thing to be sorry for."

Firm as her resolution had been not to see him again she was weighing the relief it would be to avoid going home, against the danger of encouraging him.

"Where are your manners, sir? You haven't even offered to drive me home."

"God pity us homeless children in the great city tonight!" he cried, aware that she was relenting. "My car's parked yonder by the Sycamore tavern. The night invites the adventurous spirit. We'll dare the elements and ride hard and fast like king's messengers."

"Will you keep that up—just that way—pretending we're two kids cutting up, as we used to do?"

"Of course, Grace; you may count on it."

"Well, I'm tired and bored with myself, and was dreading the ride home—I'll go! But whither?"

"To McGovern's house of refreshment at the border of a greenwood, known to Robin Hood in olden times!" cried Cummings, elated by her consent. "We'll stop at the Sycamore and I'll telephone the varlet to make the coffee hot."

"I supped there once, years ago!" But the crowd was large and boisterous," she replied now entering fully into the spirit of the proposed adventure. Their attempt at archaic speech recalled their youthful delight in the Arthurian legends in the old days when their world was enfolded in a golden haze of romance.

It was impossible to think of Cummings otherwise than as a boy, and a foolish boy, but amusing when the humor was on him as now, and to have supper with him would work injury to no one.

While he talked to McGovern she went into a booth and explained to her mother that she wouldn't be home for supper.

Arriving at McGovern's, they were warmly welcomed by the proprietor.

"It gets mighty lonesome out here in the winter," he said. "The missus thought you'd like having supper right here in the living room so's you could sort o' chum with the fire."

"A heavenly idea!" said Grace, eying the table. Mrs. McGovern, a stout woman whose face shone with good nature summoned her husband to help bring in the dishes.



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THE wind whined in the chimney and somewhere a shutter banged spitefully.

"That's the only touch we needed to make a perfect evening!" said Grace, her cheeks glowing. "How did you ever come to think of McGovern's?"

"Just one of my little happy thoughts. Now that we've found the way there's no reason why we can't repeat," said Cummings.

"There you go! This doesn't establish a precedent; it belongs to those experiences it's better never to try again."

"Oh, thunder!" he said, with a shrug. "There's no use in our worrying. Let the old folks do that. I guess we've all got a right to be happy and tastes differ as to what happiness is. That's all."

This of course wasn't all, but she refrained from saying so.

"Grace," he resumed, "every time I get blue it's you I want to see."

"Tush, tush! I'd never have come if I'd thought you were going to be foolish. Don't you get the notion into your silly head that you can run to me every time you get down in the mouth. There's no reason why I should hold your hand when you're sorrowful; I don't want the job."

He became tractable, obedient, anxious to please her. She was sorry for him, much as she would have been sorry for a child who never quite learned his lessons; and there were lessons Bob Cummings would never learn.

After they had eaten their dessert they danced, and he was again the good play-fellow. Suddenly McGovern, who was assisting his wife in clearing the table, darted across the room and stopped the music.

"Good Lord; it's some one at the door!" cried Bob, as the outer door shook under a heavy knock.

As McGovern opened the door a few grudging inches a male voice saluted him by name.

"Let us in, Mac; we're freezing to death!"

"Sorry, but we're closed for the season," McGovern answered.

"That doesn't go, Mac! You can't turn me down," replied the voice.

McGovern, with his shoulder against the door, threw a look of inquiry at Cummings and Grace. Cummings lifted his head as the voice again demanded admittance.

"Sounds like Atwood—a chap I know," he said to Grace. "Who's with him, Mac?"

Before McGovern could answer a vigorous pressure flung the door open and a young man stepped in followed by a young woman in a fur coat and smart toque.

"Never thought you'd shut the door in my face, Mac!" cried the young man. "We've got to have some coffee and sandwiches. Hello, Mrs. Mac; how's everything?"

The young woman, blinking in the light, was walking toward the fireplace when she became aware that McGovern and his wife had been entertaining other guests. She paused and stared, her gaze passing slowly from Cummings to Grace. Her companion, finding that McGovern and his wife were receiving coldly his voluble expressions of regard, now first caught sight of the two figures across the room.

"Hello-o-o!" he exclaimed. "Look who's here!"

"Why, Jimmie, is that you!" said Cummings with a gulp.

"No doubt about it! I call it some night! And Mac, the old pirate, didn't want to let me in! And Evelyn was dying of the cold!"

The McGoverns were hastily retiring toward the kitchen, Mac tiptoeing as though leaving a death chamber. The weight of his grievous error was upon him; never before had he precipitated a wife upon a husband in so disturbing a fashion.

"Coffee and sandwiches, Mac!" Atwood called after him.

Grace was watching the young woman, who pulled a chair away from the table, which still bore evidences of the recent repast, and sank into it. She was tall and slender; the light struck gold in her hair; her full lips were parted in a smile susceptible of a variety of interpretations.

Feeling perhaps that Grace's eyes were upon her, she bent and plucked a raveling, real or imaginary, from the skirt of her coat. She slowly unbuttoned the coat and drew off her gloves with elaborate care.

Her companion stood with his hands thrust into the pockets of his overcoat, grinning. An old-fashioned clock on the mantel began to strike to the accompaniment of queer raspings of its mechanism. The hands indicated the hour as ten, but in the manner of its kind the hammer within pounded out twelve. There was a suggestion of insolence in the protracted thumping of the bell.

"What a funny clock!" Atwood remarked with the jubilant tone of one who has made a discovery of great value to mankind.

"It's a dreadful liar!" said Grace.

"My grandfather used to have one just like it, with a basket of fruit painted on the door!" exclaimed Atwood, advancing toward Grace, beaming with gratitude for her response to his attempt to promote conversation.

He was short, plump and blond, with thin fair hair already menaced by baldness. He was not far advanced in the twenties and looked very like an overgrown schoolboy. Grace appraised him as a person of kindly impulses and possibly not wholly without common sense.

Having planted himself beside Grace he remarked further upon clocks and their general unreliability, while he rolled his eyes first toward Cummings and then in the direction of the lady in the fur coat. Grace had already assumed without the aid of this telegraphy that the lady was Bob's wife. Atwood seemed to be appealing to her to assist him in terminating a situation that was verging upon the intolerable, and this was deserving of all praise. Mrs. Cummings might sit there forever unless something happened.

Bob continued to wear the look of one condemned and awaiting the pleasure of the executioner. Grace felt strongly moved to walk up to him and shake him. Without the sustaining presence of Atwood she would have retired to the domestic end of the McGovern establishment and waited for the storm to blow over; but the storm, if such indeed impended, was slow in developing.

"Well, this can't last forever," said Grace in a low tone.

"If something doesn't happen in a minute I'm a dead man," Atwood replied. "I think it would be nice if we all got acquainted. I'm Miss Durland, Mr. Atwood," said Grace in a tone audible throughout the room.

"Thank you so much! I was just dying to know your name!" he declared fervidly. "Oh, Evelyn—!"

Evelyn lifted her head and looked at him defiantly, but he squared himself and said:

"Mrs. Cummings, Miss Durland. I really supposed you had met before."

His voice rose to an absurd squeak as he expressed this last hopeful sentiment.

Evelyn nodded slightly, a nod that might have been intended for Grace or quite as definitely for an enlarged photograph of an ancestral McGovern with whiskers that adorned the wall behind her.

Grace glanced at Bob, still rooted to the floor, who rallied sufficiently to remark:

"Well, I suppose we might as well go home—" a suggestion not without ambiguity as there were four persons in the room and two, at least, having just arrived and awaiting refreshments, might have been assumed to prefer to linger.

"Not just yet!" said Grace, walking slowly toward Evelyn. "There's something I'd like to say to Mrs. Cummings."

"Really!" Evelyn exclaimed with discouraging serenity.

"Oh, it doesn't matter—not now!" interposed Cummings, with sudden animation.

"I think maybe Grace—"

"Grace!" Evelyn repeated scornfully. "I'm going home. Jimmy, I want you to take me home."

"Yes, Evelyn; of course we'll go whenever you like," said Atwood. "But we ought to explain things a little. I mean you and I ought to explain them," he elaborated as he saw her lips tighten. "I wouldn't want Bob to think—"

"I don't care what Bob thinks!" she flared. "He lied to me; he told me he had a business engagement, to get out of taking me to Uncle Fred's! And this was the engagement!"

"But everything's going to be explained," Atwood persisted. "You know there's always an explanation of everything, and Bob's the best fellow in the world—you know that, Evelyn."

"I know nothing of the kind! I'll let him know at the proper time and place what I think of him."

"Well, of course, Evelyn," said Atwood with his odd little pipe of a laugh. "But he was very earnest; he brought Cummings to his side by an imperious gesture. With his hand resting on Cummings's shoulder he began:

"I'm awfully sorry about this, old man. You know I'm in and out of your house a lot and you never seem to mind. And tonight I tried to get you on the telephone to see if we could do something—the three of us I mean—run down to see a picture or any old thing—and the maid said you were at Colonel Felton's; both of you, I thought she meant. And I called up there about the time I thought the party would be over, and found you weren't there and asked Evelyn to let me come for her. And I thought it would be good fun to take a little dash through the storm and I knew you wouldn't care. There couldn't be any harm in that; we've all been out here together lots of times."

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"Why, that's perfectly all right, Jimmie!" exclaimed Cummings with a flourish of magnanimity which did not, however, awaken the grateful response he may have expected from Evelyn who had murmured an indifferent, "Thank you, Jimmy," when Atwood concluded.

"This is all just a little lark," Cummings went on. "Miss Durland and I have known each other all our lives. She's an old friend. I brought her here just as you and Jimmie came, for the fun of it. I wouldn't want you to think—"

"That will do!" said Evelyn rising so suddenly that Cummings backed away from her in alarm. "Anything you have to say to me needn't be said before this old friend of yours."

"But Evelyn, you're not fair!" cried Cummings hotly. "It isn't fair to Miss Durland. I wouldn't have you think—"

"You're terribly anxious about what I think!" Evelyn interrupted sharply. "I'll think what I please!"

Grace, on her way to the sofa on which she had left her coat and hat, swung round, her face aflame.

"It may not occur to you, Mrs. Cummings, that what you think of me isn't of the slightest importance."

"You act as though you thought it was!" Evelyn retorted.

"I'm not acting; you're doing enough of it!"

"You've probably had more experience in such scenes!"

"With much better actors than your husband I hope."

"Humph! I don't believe we're going to like each other."

"The regret is not mine, I assure you!"

This interchange ended as McGovern appeared bearing a tray.

Grace was standing before a mirror straightening her hat. Her preparations for departure were provocative of thought in Atwood's mind. He expressed the thought immediately, evidently with the laudable hope of lessening the tension.

"Oh, Miss Durland, won't you let me take you home? I can run you into town without the slightest trouble."

Evelyn's surprise at this suggestion betrayed itself in a spurt of coffee that missed the cup she was filling and spread in an amber stain on the tablecloth.

Grace was walking toward the door drawing on her gloves.

"Thank you ever so much, Mr. Atwood," she said evenly. "But Mr. Cummings is going to take me home!"

Cummings glanced at his wife, uncertainty plainly written on his face.

"Why, yes—yes—" he stammered.

"I'm waiting, Bob!" said Grace.

He gathered up his raincoat and cap. Grace waited for him to open the door for her.

"Good night, Mr. Atwood!" she flung over her shoulder, and the door closed.

"Well, there was that!" Cummings said after the car had reached the highway.

"I hope you're satisfied with yourself," said Grace angrily.

"Good Lord! Didn't I do the best I could about it?"

"You couldn't have done worse if you'd had a week to plan it! Instead of standing there like a fool when your wife came in

why didn't you walk right up to her like a man and introduce me? You were scared to death; you thought of nothing but how you were going to square yourself with your wife. You did everything you could to give her the idea that you were ashamed of me."

"Why, Grace, you can't mean this!" He slowed down the car the better to talk. "God knows I did the best I could. I couldn't help being surprised when they came in. And you never can tell how Evelyn's going to take anything."

"Oh yes; it was Evelyn you were troubled about; you weren't at all worried about me! When you came out of your trance and tried to explain how I came to be there the mischief was already done. Of course she wouldn't listen to you then. You certainly made a mess of it."

"I don't understand you at all! I swear I did the best I could."

"Well it was a pretty poor best! Please mind what you're doing; you're still so nervous you'll land in the ditch in a minute." Thus admonished he steadied himself at the wheel. Her anger had expended itself and she was now staring ahead at the snow-covered road.

No word had passed between them for several minutes and Grace, absorbed in her own ideas, was hoping he wouldn't break the silence. Her respect for him was gone; she disliked him cordially and saw him only as a timid, evasive person whose primary impulse was self-protection. He might play on the wrong side of a forbidden wall but the moment he was discovered he would scramble for safe territory.

He touched her hand so suddenly that she started, and snatched it away, with a feeling of repulsion.

"We've both been thinking about what happened out there," he said. "I don't know just where it leaves me. I don't know how Evelyn is going to take it."

He paused, bending forward while he waited for some encouragement to go on.

"I don't care how Evelyn is going to take it! I don't want to discuss this any further."

"Of course if she wants a row—"

"Please be quiet!"

"But I can't leave it this way! You've meant too much to me for us to part like this. What I was going to say was—"

She sighed despairingly and resettled herself in her place.

"What I want you to know is that I care a lot for you Grace—and if there's a row—if we break up, Evelyn and I, I mean—I'd like to think, Grace, that—"

"I think you've lost your mind!" she cried furiously.

"But you don't see—you don't understand—"

"Oh, but I do! If Evelyn turns you out you think maybe you'd like to give me a trial! That's certainly an idea! I suppose you have visions of me figuring in a divorce suit—Cummings against Cummings! I don't believe you used to be like this. It's astonishing how you've deteriorated!"

"I didn't expect this from you, Grace," he replied bitterly. "I've felt that I could always count on you to—"

The engine began to cough peevishly and he stopped to investigate.

"Here's luck!" he exclaimed spitefully

as he got back into the car. "Just about enough gas to pull us to the next garage. I guess somebody's pinned a jinx on the evening!"

"I'll wait outside," she said, when the car crawled up to the garage.

"Only a minute, Grace. I'm awfully sorry."

As she stood in the cement driveway the whistle followed by the flash of the headlight of an incoming interurban car on the track that ran parallel with the highway caught her attention. Across the road several people were waiting on the platform and she resolved to board the car if it stopped before Cummings reappeared. She was in a humor to annoy him if she could and as the car slowed down she began to walk slowly toward the platform and then with a glance over her shoulder ran and swung herself aboard.

As the car got under way she caught a glimpse of the roadster as Cummings backed it out. She derived no small degree of satisfaction from the reflection that her departure in this fashion expressed her scorn of him more effectually than anything she could have said.

She left the car at the interurban station and walked home. Her knowledge of life was broadening and that, too, in divisions of the Great Curriculum of whose very existence she had had only the haziest consciousness. Her freedom, the independence she so greatly prized, was not without its perils. Her thoughts took a high range; she wondered whether, after all, the individual could, without incurring serious hazards, ignore the safeguards flung out by society.

She wanted to laugh at the affair of McGovern's, but under the calm stars it was not so easy to laugh at it. What the State had done to educate her, to fortify and strengthen her for the battle of life—a phrase she detested from her mother's frequent use of it—counted for naught.

She was alarmed to find that she never really reached any conclusion in settling her problems. When she thought she had determined any of the matters that rose with so malevolent an insistence for decision, some unexpected turn left her still beset by uncertainties.

Two policemen standing on a corner ceased talking as she passed and she felt their eyes following her. They symbolized the power of the law; they were agents of society; they were representatives of the order of things against which she had been trying to persuade herself she was in rebellion. She questioned the desirability of being a rebel; such a status had its disagreeable and uncomfortable side.

When she reached her room she sat down thinking she would write her usual daily letter to Trenton; but with paper before her and a pen in her hand she was unable to bring herself to it. The disturbance at McGovern's had shaken her more than she liked to believe.

But before she slept the thought of Trenton was once more a solace and a hope. She was satisfied that she loved him. He had asked her to wire him when she was quite sure. Tomorrow she would send him the telegram he had asked for and she even framed it in words that would convey her impatience for his coming.

*In the next instalment of this great novel—in May COSMOPOLITAN—Grace finds herself standing at the parting of the ways. Which one does she take?*



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